

T W E L V E
S E R M O N S,

PREACHED ON

Particular Occasions,

BY THE

REV. EDWARD BARRY, A.M. & M.D.

C H A P L A I N

TO THE

Right Reverend LORD BISHOP of KILDARE.

L O N D O N :

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14/4/46

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A D D R E S S

TO THE

R E A D E R.

THE person who ventures himself as an author, has three objects in view, either *pride*, *profit*, or *instruction*; to *one* or *all* of these, the public are indebted, as well for the reputable, as the most indifferent fallies of the press. In this confession the writer of the following pages naturally includes himself; and if he should be desired to take his choice, and say which of these motives influenced his mind to gorge on the world such a drug as sermons, he will frankly answer—that it was a moderate mixture perhaps of the three.

With respect to *pride*, he has indeed but very humble pretensions to that as an author; and if he possessed the greatest, there is nothing of real novelty which can be found out in the word of God; as nothing can be added, so nothing must be taken away;—here the most towering genius is held fast by the *written letter*; and the truths which are revealed, have been repeatedly held forth by the most embroidered pens! He further knows, that whatever little approbation he might have acquired in the *delivery* of these discourses, is much endangered when he dresses them in print; for *preaching* and *composing* have two very *distinct merits*!

Having thus acquitted himself, in a great degree he hopes, from pride, he begs now to examine himself on the motive of *profit*; and here he despairs not of the unanimous support of many witnesses to protest, that of *all* the subjects on earth, he could not have been so unfortunate in *any* as that of a *sermon-vender*, to gratify his hopes: *Divinity* is an article very *seldom* called for.—No!—an *obscene essay*, an *indecent print*, a *deluding* novel,

novel, a few precious leaves of *detraction*—'tis *these* are the favourites—'tis *these* which fascinate the eye, and are all in vogue! *these* are greedily sought after, and delicately preserved; while the toils of piety and of learning—the expiring words of holy men and saints—the dignity of our nature—and the glory of religion—these are out of date, forgotten and despised—these lie cheaply huddled on some obscure stall, and like their insulted authors, are buried in their dust!

Surely, then, the hopes of profit in this instance, must be truly forlorn! Indeed, so shamefully little are the incomes of the unbeneficed clergy in this country, that it is natural to add, if they can, a something to that little. Should even their indiscretions pass unnoticed, poverty cannot be hid; and where-ever she is, contempt accompanies her. It would require very little logic to prove, that those very indiscretions are too often, either the cause or the consequence of their narrow circumstances:—for instance, a clergyman should appear in every

view fuitable to his high calling; I mean, not in *pomp* nor *parade*; for those are wholly repugnant to the injunctions of their humble Master; but decency of *apparel*, of conversation, and of company, certainly becomes them; and can this be effected with the narrow pittances destined to them? Experience knows that it is impossible, especially in cities and market towns:—hence, then, they are suffered to sink into the meaner walks of society—be at the *mercy* of some—the scoff and persecution of others!

The Dissenters do not behave so *unfeelingly*;—*they are generous*;—they raise *their* teachers beyond the sound of pity!

The opportunity of exemplifying common equity is scarcely allowed to some of the clergy, among whom at all times it should be so nicely exact; for few will take into the account, that the circumstances by no means keep pace with the principles: and what is an effort, nay, an impossibility for one to evidence is almost awkward for *another to avoid*.—Let a man be guilty of every excess, if he
can

can but roar out the sound of " paying his way," it will insure him more respect and countenance from the world than though he possessed every virtue, yet deficient in *income!* to such inconveniencies are the unbeneficed clergy exposed;—how very much does this circumstance alone take from the importance of their documents, and distress minds, which should be made as happy as possible, to render others so?

How many are obliged to degrade the dignity of their order by mean avocations and secular employments! The fathers of our church *know* these things; the woeful tales of unmerited distress, from their *regular-bred children too*, almost weekly stare them in the face in the public prints;—perhaps they find relief in a *merciful laity!*

When will the time come, gracious and universal God! that this huge, this ungodly gulf, between the dignified and the unbeneficed clergy, shall be removed—at present the opprobrium of our church, and the grief of all its good members?

Alas! in vain were the zealous efforts of the worthy prelate of Landaff, to remove effectually such oppressive distinctions; his heart, however, still glows with the same ardour, and will not miss an opportunity to accomplish so just a cause.

The clergy, of all men, should not be so penuriously cramped, for *they* are particularly called upon to acts of charity, and at the same time their hands are tied down, by canon law, from adding to their little by any traffic or business. Many other things relating to this subject press upon my pen for complaint; but all will be useless, till God shall give the temper to those who have the opportunity of removing the evil which many thousands have so long grievously lamented.

Happy for those of the clergy, who, like the author, are in possession of a power to strengthen the little gains of the church by another profession where canon law does not interfere;—he means, such as are graduated in physic. The practice of medicine,

cine, at one time, was principally confined to the priesthood; and at *this time*, it is practised by that order in several countries;—and it is his pleasure to hear, that several of the established clergy are reviving the same custom, and, in conjunction with their clerical duties, are practising in the country, as well with credit and advantage to *themselves* as *others*: and how acceptable, in a country chiefly abounding with poor must be a parochial minister of this description?—In every sort of distress, application is usually made to the resident clergyman; and where could his help be more happily administered, than to allay the pangs of disease?—what favourable opportunities would present themselves, of instilling into their minds the precepts of religion?—how would it endear his person to them, and sweeten his documents?—His ministry and his medicine would aid one another. He could take from the wealthy, and give to the poor. Providence will give his blessing to such good endeavours.

A noble

A noble instance has been lately seen in Royalty, how much Heaven acknowledged the efforts of the much honoured and Reverend Dr. Willis. May the success of that *physician*, and *divine*, serve as a popular introduction to the study of medicine—to the knowledge of the human frame—the most natural of all enquiries; without which, in his opinion, every education is incomplete: for his own part, he does not hesitate to say, that if circumstances shall require it, his resolution is, to advantage himself by the practice of physic; and at the same time he feels such a partiality and pleasure in clerical duties, that whatever success might attend it, he would, on no account whatever, relinquish the other. That sacred commission which he received at the altar, *he never will desert!*—Educated very early in medicine, and having at length received his diploma as Doctor of that faculty, during his residence in London for these two years last past, he has been very tenacious not to *lose*, but to add to his stock of medical information as much as possible. He has, therefore, diligently attended the most eminent

eminent lecturers in this place, in anatomy, physic, chemistry, &c.—so that without vanity, or egotism—nay, he would rather refer, if necessary, to those very professors for the report of his medical attainments.

Having thus much said, he begs here to make a serious proposition to Patrons of church preferment.

The author almost despairs of personal interest to secure him even a small living!—With respect to his doctrine, and pretensions as a preacher, the world may form some idea from what he hath written in this book. Now, if Patrons, in the disposal of their favours, really consult the good of their fellow-creatures, and should such be convinced of the many advantages resulting to a parish, in a clergyman thus fitted, he here *pledges himself*, that if honoured by an appointment, as Rector, or Vicar, of any church—no matter the country, nor the distance—that he will, then, not only, to the utmost of his power, faithfully and conscientiously discharge the sacred duties of his order,

order, but will cheerfully be ready, at all times, to serve his poor parishioners with every possible advice and attention, without gratuity, or fee!

Many apologies are certainly due for this digression; but when speaking on the subject of a clergyman's profit, these ideas branched in the author's way. He will, therefore, now briefly touch upon the last motive which tempted him to publish these sermons, though he must candidly own, that they appeared to him as a very proper vehicle to usher in the observations already made; but the hopes that *some few* might gather instruction from them, was assuredly the most prevailing wish. It is true, they have neither speculation nor eloquence to recommend them. He rather wished to address the heart with fervour, and with all decent brevity; for he most cordially agrees with good Bishop Burnet, who, when speaking of the clergy, says, "*Long sermons, in which points of divinity or morality are regularly handled, are above the capacity of the people; short and plain ones, upon a*
large

large portion of scripture, would be better hearkened to, and have a much better effect. They would make the hearers understand, and love the scriptures more." And experience every where confirms this good prelate's assertion.

The Author begs to express his sincere acknowledgments to those who did him the honour of subscribing to a book of this complexion; and those who rather wished their names not to appear in print, are equally entitled to his best thanks.

Richmond Buildings,
London,
10th April, 1789. }

the first of these was the
fact that the new
system was not
yet in operation.

The second was the
fact that the new
system was not
yet in operation.

The third was the
fact that the new
system was not
yet in operation.

The fourth was the
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The seventh was the
fact that the new
system was not
yet in operation.

T O
THE REVEREND
RICHARD KAYE, L.L.D.
DEAN OF LINCOLN,
ARCHDEACON OF NOTTINGHAM, &c.

REV. SIR,

IF the following Sermons should not appear to deserve your Patronage, I am very confident that they will not provoke your censure. The Severity of ill-natured Criticism is the Privilege only of a pigmy Temper; but well-taught Minds *disdain it*.

I shall

I shall at least have Credit for selecting out your Name, and prefixing it to this Volume; though indeed it cannot but expose me to some apparent Disadvantages; for it will naturally remind the Public of those Ornaments which distinguish you as a Preacher, and perhaps give them but an indifferent Relish for the humble Efforts of my Pen.—They will likewise anticipate in you, a living Example of every written Discourse: however, Sir, I will even hazard these Inconveniencies for so good an Opportunity of saying—that Preferment, however great, to such active generous Minds as yourself, is a public Blessing; it is *a Curse*, however, to the Selfish and Indolent!!

Allow me, Sir, in the Name of all those who have the Honour and Happiness of knowing you, to express their ardent Wishes, that a Life so useful to the Church, and so bene-

(xvii)

beneficial to the Community, may long be
preserved in Health and Happiness.

I have the Honour to remain,

Reverend S I R,

With all due Respect and Esteem,

Your obliged,

and honoured Servant,

Richmond Buildings, }
April 17th, 1789. }

EDWARD BARRY.

A

in the field to the community, may long be

the best of health and happiness.

It is the duty of the community to

provide for the health and happiness of

its members.

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C O N T E N T S.

S E R M O N I.

GALATIANS vi. 10.

*AS we have therefore opportunity, let us do good
unto all men.*

S E R M O N II.

JEREMIAH xiv. 22.

*Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that
can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers?
Art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we
will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these
things.*

S E R M O N III.

ECCLESIASTES xii. 14.

*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with
every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether
it be evil.*

S E R M O N IV.

COLOSSIANS iii. 2.

*Set your affection on things above, not on things
on the earth.*

S E R M O N V.

A C T S xvi. 30, 31.

*Sirs, What must I do to be saved?—Believe on the
Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

S E R.

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S E R M O N VI.

MATTHEW xxv. 13.

Watch therefore, for ye know not the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh.

S E R M O N VII.

I TIMOTHY vi. 12.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

S E R M O N VIII.

J O H N xix. 30.

——— *It is finished!*

S E R M O N IX.

J O H N xi. 25.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

S E R M O N X.

ROMANS viii. 31.

If God be for us, who can be against us?

S E R M O N XI.

M A R K x. 23.

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

S E R M O N XII.

L U K E xv. 17, 18.

And when he came to himself, he said, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED ON

MONDAY, the 14th Day of August, 1786,

IN THE

Parish Church of ST. GILES-IN-THE-FIELDS,

BEFORE THE

BRITISH ASSURANCE SOCIETY,

Incorporated and established by DEED, inrolled in his Majesty's
Court of KING'S BENCH, WESTMINSTER;

INSTITUTED

*For the Support and Benefit of the Sick, or otherwise afflicted
Members, Orphans, Widows, &c.*

B

British Assurance Society,

QUEEN'S-ARMS TAVERN, NEWGATE STREET, LONDON,

August 24, 1786.

AT a Meeting of the Court of Directors of this Society, held this Evening at the above Tavern, it was unanimously resolved, That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Rev. EDWARD BARRY, M. D. for his excellent Sermon preached before their Society in the Parish Church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, on Monday the 14th Instant (the Annual Feast-Day); and that the Doctor be desired to have the same printed.

By Order of the



JOSEPH POTTER, Sec.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
C L A U D I U S,
BY DIVINE PERMISSION,
LORD BISHOP of SODOR and MAN.

MY LORD,

THE Society before whom this Sermon was preached, have desired me to print it; and I consent more willingly, because it serves to convey, with this humble Tribute, my very best Acknowledgments to your Lordship.

I am proud of telling the World that, as my Instruments for Ordination were connected with your Lordship's Diocese, I had

xx DEDICATION.

the Honour of receiving from the Hands of
its present candid Prelate my sacred Mission.
—The Diocese, my Lord, has been already
distinguished by a WILSON!—may it long
enjoy the Learning and Dignity of a
CRIGAN!

I beg to remain, my Lord, with all due
Respect,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Very grateful Son and Servant,

London, }
1st Sept. 1786. }

EDWARD BARRY.

S E R M O N I.

GALATIANS, chap. vi. ver. 10.

*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good
unto all men.*

THE whole history of our blessed Saviour, from his cradle to the grave, is one perfect system of divine and human excellence. His miracles and doctrines clearly evidence the former; compassion, meekness, love, and resignation were the sweet companions of the latter.—He healed all manner of diseases; he made the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear.—In him the *wretched* found relief; the *guilty*, an advocate; the *desponding*, a comforter.—He was followed by the miserable and unfortunate of every class and description; and none who implored his aid were once denied. The

proud, self-opinioned Pharisee had not *his wishes gratified*; but the helpless, poor, and contrite had ever their prayers attended to: and where objects of pity and compassion were not found, the gracious Redeemer industriously *sought* them—he *went about doing good*. When for these tender acts of mercy his enemies mocked and insulted him, he was either silent; or, if he did speak, it favoured of the greatest *meekness and condescension*. Nor in the very agonies of death were his humanity and love abated!—Hear with astonishment how he prays for his barbarous and unfeeling murderers!—uttering, even with his dying breath, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!”—*Thus* did our Lord live, and thus he died: and though it is utterly impossible for us ever to arrive to such a distinguished eminence of virtue and piety, yet it is *his command* and *our duty*, to imitate, as much as possible, this great example. Are you charmed with *his illustrious* character? Should even these faint outlines *provoke* and *win* your admiration, let me call your serious attention to the finished picture of the incarnate God, as
drawn

drawn in the sacred volume by the divine pencil of his evangelists. And though he has withdrawn his lovely form from the carnal eye, still, through the windows of faith, you may see this same person, now gloriously seated at the right-hand of God, commanding you who profess to love and worship him, *to go, and do likewise*: or, as he speaks by the inspired penman of my text, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." The words are in themselves *clear and obvious*; and require of me only to recommend them to practice. Indeed, so respectable an assembly as the present, established on the noble basis of policy, humanity, and religion, forbids prolixity of advice to virtues you already anticipate. Your appearance this morning is the best comment on the text; it should inspire my address.

To do good, is the absolute *command* of him who made us: such a principle seems, as it were, implanted in our frame; and that amiable jewel would oftner shine forth, were it not obscured by the blackness of malevo-

lence, the hatefulneſs of jealousy, and the ſordidneſs of avarice. If then ſuch violence be purpoſely offered to nature herſelf, how abundantly more vile and deſpicable are they, who reſuſe to do good where nature inclines—the welfare of ſociety depends—and the ſolemn obligations of God enjoin?—Steeled indeed, muſt that heart be!—truly wretched ſuch a mind!

The morals of thoſe who are called Hea-then hold forth a reprov- ing leſſon to many who *call themſelves* Chriſtians.—If we are devoid of commiſeration for our fellow-creatures, vain are all our pretenſions to moral and religious virtues:—“For if we love not our brother, whom we have ſeen, how can we love God, whom we have not ſeen?”——Our love muſt not be *nominal*, but *real*; the good we do, not in *ſpeculation*, but *demonſtration*; for many there are, who will load us with good wiſhes, and what they call *good counſel*, who would *ſtart* from bringing either into action, if at the expence of *money* or *pains*.

Our

Our duty *is to do good*; to be busy in that godlike exercise; studying and seeking for objects to administer relief to, according to their various exigencies, and to the best of our ability. And opportunities enough there are for every one of us to do good—not merely to friends, but to all, even to enemies:—we have *continual opportunities* of doing good, either to the *minds* or *bodies* of our fellow-creatures.

Contemptible beyond description is that being, who lives only to do good to himself; is satisfied in the reflection of doing no harm; and solaces himself with the idea of being a good member of society.—Alas! too many are these blanks in virtue; too great a heap of such lumber in creation; they see no harm in *themselves*, and society discovers no good.

Sad, indeed, must the feelings of that person one day be, who *never sought* an opportunity of doing good; and when one offers, he either avails himself of some *mean subterfuge*, or else unfeelingly denies. I pray
such

such to consider how great a charge will most assuredly lye at his door.—It is an admitted fact, that they who suffer harm to happen, when in *their power to prevent it*, are concerned in the guilt.—The man who witnesses the death of another, and knows it was in his *power* to have hindered it, and yet *refuses* ; do not *you*, and does not *common law* consider such an one as accessory to the crime?—And what will you say, my friends, of that person, who sees an object distressed—pining away through illness or want ; whom the oil of a Samaritan might yet be instrumental to keep alive ; and who otherwise, to our judgment, must fall a victim to his distress ? Do not you, on a parity of reasoning, consider such a person equally cruel and criminal, who refuses his best endeavours to restore him ?—No matter what is the instrument, whether the sword, illness, hunger, or any other adversity, if it effects *death* !—our neglecting to step between either, makes our *turpitude* the same, our *guilt* the same.

Thus much have I observed on doing good in general ; and God has bereft none
of

of us of some opportunity or other of evidencing this divine principle.—Time would fail to dwell longer on this subject, without making it more *immediately* applicable to the present occasion : suffice it then to say, that if we love God, we must infallibly love, and consequently do all the good we can to every individual part of society, and on every occasion ; not doing it as unto man, but as unto the Lord.

I shall now beg to offer a few words on that institution of which you are members : an institution which equally proves the wisdom of your heads, and the goodness of your hearts. It shews, that in the sunshine of prosperity you have not forgotten that it is the lot of our *degraded* nature to see the clouds of adversity.—A thousand calamities every moment await us !——*In the midst of life we are in death.*——Neither kings nor subjects are exempt from sudden and unexpected attacks, either on life, health, or property.—To make the best provision, therefore, is both our duty and interest. If, after our best exertions, we are yet the sons of
of

of misfortune, we have nothing immediately to reproach ourselves with; it is our duty, then, to bear patiently the good pleasure of God.—But if our sufferings are the immediate offspring of *our own neglect*; if that money, which should have been held in reserve for threatened illness, has been plundered to gratify excess or pleasure, how bitter then the cup of adversity! how thorny is the pillow of disease! *how cutting is every sober thought!* But, *even here*, a good heart cannot withhold relief.

But I will take another view of distress.—Methinks I see the industrious mechanic, whose *toil* and *danger* of business have either exposed him to some *sudden accident*, or else nailed him to a bed of lingering illness; incapable now of labour, (which before gave bread to himself and a numerous family,) what is he to do?—To borrow, he cannot; to beg, *he is ashamed*.—His friends, indeed, when in health and prosperity, were *numerous*, and *great in profession*; but now he is laid low on the couch of sorrow and of pain; when penury and distress stare hard
in

in his meagre face ; whither are they gone ?
 —Alas ! if to be *found at all*, unavailing
 sighs and sounds too often insult and *pierce*
 his heart : he feels all deserting him, and
 one affected friend shifting him to another !
 But, for all this, his noble mind strives to
 bear up ; to conceal the pangs of cruel dis-
 appointment, of disease, and sharp necessity ;
 and would gladly yield to the arms of death.
 —But, when he casts his rolling eyes on the
 partner of his breast, clinging round the
 dying form of her only beloved friend ; his
 infant, unprovided children, with faltering
 voices muttering forth their grief and wants !
This is too severe!—he cannot bear it.—*Their*
distress, their hunger, their sorrows rend his
 very soul !—He now drops the last *glittering,*
painful tear, and is no more !—his name for-
 gotten, and his *posterity neglected!*—But not
 so with you :—by uniting together in this
 society, you have secured to *yourselves* and
families every rational and comfortable aid
 against the hour of distress.—God knows
 only how soon it may reach any of us ! And
 though we dare not murmur, nor can we
 oppose what Heaven shall chuse to come to
 pass;

pass; yet it is our immediate concern to make the best preparation for it; we cannot tell what is behind the curtain!—What is impending the next moment, the most inquisitive genius cannot say: The revolution of a *few hours only* effect many awful changes. To some it gives prosperity, to others adversity; to some ease, to others pain; to some life, to others death.—Your institution plainly informs me, that you have meditated on these things. Your code of laws is excellent and salutary; as well for the accommodation of exigencies, as the discipline of your manners.—By becoming members of the BRITISH ASSURANCE SOCIETY, you have embraced a noble opportunity of doing good to yourselves and families.

Should sickness confine you to your beds, you have a certain friend in your establishment; you have an allowance to answer the demands of nature, to afford you *necessaries*; it may be, to give you conveniences.—Compare then your comfortable situation with others, whose few short intervals

vals from the racking pains of disease, are succeeded by the gnawings of hunger, and keen want of every kind; and, at last, obliged to linger out their miserable days in a loathsome hospital; whilst the objects of their tenderest love are left in the miserable cot, feeling the most accumulated calamity!

But again:—your institution seems to have monopolized humanity itself; it not only has compassion on the disease of body, but extends its benevolence to any other known distress.—Should the merciless flames devour your all, *relief is given*; and and at such a deplorable season, O, how welcome!—What an opportunity then of doing good to the *despairing, uninsured sufferer*!—But, last of all, should *death*, sooner than expected, snatch you from the endearing arms of a fond family, whose whole dependence is on you; how would your *dying moments be embittered*, to leave them entirely helpless, destitute, and forlorn!—But when you see in your establishment a husband to your wife, and a parent

to

to your engaging infants, it much assuages the agonies of dissolution, and cheers you better to give the last wishful, longing farewell!

Such are the great blessings of your establishment; to which an invitation is given for more to join you, that, like the genial influence of the sun, you may extend comfort to *all around*.

May God prosper all such undertakings, and strengthen you in every good work.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT
TEMPLE CHURCH, BRISTOL,

IN AUGUST, 1785;

OCCASIONED BY
THE GENERAL DROUGHT
OF THAT SUMMER.

C



TO THE
Rev. JOSEPH EASTERBROOK,
THE WORTHY
VICAR of TEMPLE CHURCH,
BRISTOL.

REV. SIR,

IN no Instance whatever have the Corporation of Bristol dignified themselves more, than in appointing you the Vicar of Temple Church.

Your Predecessor, though truly an Ornament to the Christian Character, yet an improved Edition even of *his Life* and *Manners* may be seen in you. Bristol at large is my Testimony, and your extensive Parish in particular.

xxxvi DEDICATION.

Your glorious Toils as a Parochial Priest are unexampled, and they have naturally roused the *Notice* of *some* of your Brethren in Bristol.

The handsome Expressions I had the Happiness to hear from your Diocesan's Lips, when speaking of your Name, on a late Occasion, do him the greatest Honour.

I hardly know how to excuse myself for what I have said, without even your previous Knowledge or Consent; but if Blame be due any where, it is due to your sterling Goodness and Greatness for provoking such Utterance.

With the most indelible Impressions of Gratitude for your various Acts of Friendship to me, I remain,

Your much favoured,
and very grateful Servant,

EDWARD BARRY.

S E R M O N II.

J E R E M I A H, chap. xiv. ver. 22.

Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these things.

THIS chapter was penned on account of a great drought, which produced a famine among the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. It began in the latter end of Josiah's reign, and seems to have continued till the beginning of Jehoiakim's.

This punishment for the various and complicated iniquities of that people had been often threatened; but as they gave no marks of contrition, nor interceded with God to avert the impending judgment, but *still continued impenitent and hardened,*

the vengeance of Almighty God at length forbids the clouds to drop their rains and moisten the parched lands. A very awful description of their calamity is given in some verses preceding my text. We are told, "that Judah mourneth, the gates *languish*, and are black unto the ground—that the nobles sent to the pits, but found no water—the ground was chapt—the wild asses stood likewise by the high places,—they snuffed up the wind like dragons—their eyes did fail because there was *no grass*."—Such was the *justice of God* to these unrelenting, disobedient people.

The prophet Jeremiah, like Moses of old, interceded for them by fervent prayer, that God would not leave them in their distress and guilt. But in vain are *his* intreaties. God says to him, "Pray *not* for *this people*.—When they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer up burnt-offerings, and oblations, I will not accept them; but will consume them by the *sword*, and by the famine, and by the pestilence."—Yet notwithstanding *this*, the prophet
cannot

cannot cease to intercede for them; nay, he goes so far as to extenuate their guilt, by fixing it almost upon the prophets who were among them; and who had declared to them, in opposition to what the true prophets had told them, that famine and sword should not come upon them. They spoke peace to them, when there *was no peace*. But this palliation the good prophet offered, did not avail them any thing. If they listened to fawning, hypocritical teachers, who were afraid to speak *friendly*, though *painful* truths to them, and *rejected* with disdain the *honest zeal* of true ones—the prayers even of the *faithful* should not, on that occasion, appease the wrath of Heaven: for God gives an answer to Jeremiah in the succeeding chapter, and declares, that though Moses and Samuel stood before him by prayer and sacrifice to reconcile them to him, yet he would *not* be prevailed on.

So inexorable was the Lord of Hosts against this wicked and idolatrous people, (particularly in the times of Manasseh),

that his decree had gone forth, was *irreversible*, and shortly to be executed.—Thus was the measure of their iniquity filled up. Sword, famine, and pestilence were to cut off this rebellious and *wicked people*;—which judgments were literally accomplished, both by the famine in Judah, and their final destruction by the *Romans*.

Thus does God visit the *hardened* and *impenitent*. He *first* gives them warning, and exhortation; but if those are slighted, he then visits in judgments of various sorts and degrees.—The prophet Jeremiah, and others, could *pray* for them, but could not *convert* them. He could bedew his pillow with tears, for the sufferings of Judah, but could not order one drop of rain to moisten their cracking land. Even *Baal*, tho' all Israel was at his devotion in the days of Ahab, yet he could not relieve them when a drought came. Well might the prophet *deride* such *paltry* resources, when, on occasion of this calamity in Judah, he cries out, “Are there *any* among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or, can the heavens

heavens give showers?"—As though he had said, "In this parched season, where are your Heathen helps? where are the vanities of the Gentiles?—And vain enough to give one of their idols the title of "the god of rain;" and yet incapable of *making*—of *giving*—nay, or of *knowing*, when one drop should *fall*. Can such *trash* afford relief?—nay, can the *heavens*, the habitation of God himself, give showers?—No—*even one drop of water*, from those honoured mansions, cannot fall without the *great command*!—*Thou, thou, alone*, art He, O Lord our God; therefore let us wait upon thee, for thou hast made 'all these things."

The improvements from what has been said may first instruct us, That God, at times, sends either partial or general afflictions, as tokens of his displeasure for what has passed; that by our seasonable and serious application of them, we may prevent future and severer ones. It may, secondly, teach us in times of affliction, the vanity of all *human* helps. And lastly, point out, that after all, our *whole* dependence must be on God.

With

With respect to the first, I trust it has already appeared to you, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were justly punished for their *sins*; and whilst you read of what befel them, you would not do amiss to make some little comparison between them and yourselves; for all things in the book of God are held forth for our example, admonition, and improvement: and I should hope, that the subject of my address to you this day will not be thought as *misapplied*, judged as unnecessary, or censured for its novelty. Surely, the present unusual dryness of the season, the almost general lamentation for want of rain, justify the propriety of making this a matter of our immediate enquiry.

Hear the inhabitants of this country, like those of Judah, complaining for lack of rain;—hear the husbandman mourning;—behold the once verdant meadows scorched, and nearly withering;—in fact, see all nature fatigued, and almost drooping for want of sap. But while we mourn these things, let us ask the cause.

And

And do not our sins, like those of Judah, provoke God to chasten us? Are not his Sabbaths profaned?—no matter whether *within* or *without* doors. Are not his ordinances abused? Have we not swerved from the living and true God, to serve idols of *pleasure*, of pride, of fashion, of *common* and of *genteel dissipation*? Have not luxury and infidelity reared altars? and are not they worshipped and adored by all orders, and in all forms? And will not the Lord be avenged on such a people? His spirit he solemnly declares shall not always strive with men.—But such is the base iniquity, the daringness of many, that when their *eyes see*, and their *bodies feel*, God's judgments in the earth, they are so impious as to confine them merely to the effects of *natural causes*, and so strive to explain them away, as well to their own, as the satisfaction of other consciences. Even Heathens did not this. They ascribed their various catastrophes either to the forgetfulness or the displeasure of their gods. On every occasion, therefore, either of *particular* or *general* trouble, it highly becomes

us

us to think *aright*; to see Providence in every correction frowning at our *sins*; that he looked down from heaven, and beheld the vices of men, and has nearly forbade his clouds to drop their rain.

Since we have basely turned our backs on the God of creation, forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewn to ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, the Almighty, in his sore displeasure, has given us a lesson that he can *desert us*. God has caused our land to flow with milk and honey; and, like the children of Israel, we have eat and drank, and rose up to play. Unmindful of our benefactor, regardless of his intreaties, nay, what is still more abominable, we have made a mock at both. Surely, then, for our offences we are punished. And in such deplorable calamity, where can we go? to whom must we apply for relief? Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? No; vain is all *human power*. Surely this reflection should pull down pride, and forcibly point out the insignificance of
human

human nature ; and it ought to teach us to *value*, and not abuse the *smallest* blessing ; knowing, that when we have offended *Heaven*, all the powers on earth, however *great*, *learned*, and exalted---nay, all *combined*---cannot send to a thirsty land one drop of rain ;—no *kingdom* can *purchase* it—no *wisdom* make it—no *beauty* allure it, and no monarch *command* it ; but all are *helpless*---all are *wretched*—all feel alike their *nothingness*. Well might the prophet exclaim, “ Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain ? ” He seems by the very statement of the question, to deride most pointedly their idols, and effectually sneer at their *insignificancy*. Indeed, such a question was exceedingly well *fitted* to the times. It was an open challenge to the Heathen world :—as much as to say, This is the touchstone of your Heathen idols, see what futile things *they* are. They can render you no kind of help in this your sad distress ; and are such idols deserving your worship ? What avails now your boasted mythology of tutelar deities ? Alas ! in vain do ye invoke such impotent *lumber*.—

Thus

Thus does the prophet take a seasonable opportunity of exposing their false gods, whilst with holy reverence and joy he points out the true one. "Art not thou, O Lord, our God? therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these things."

And here, in the last place, we must *wait* upon God before we can expect his mercy; and truly a miraculous blessing to have the promise of such unmerited aid in time of need. But then we must not wait upon him in a languid, *unfeeling*, ceremonial way. No truly;—as helpless beggars, we must first *feel* our wants, and *know* our poverty. Contrition, prayer, and humiliation, are the *only* keys to unlock the gates of *mercy*: for what but the reverse of these caused them to be shut? We must wait on God with the zeal of our *whole hearts*, with filial *reverence*, lamenting bitterly our sins in sackcloth and ashes; reproaching our consciences with the vilest ingratitude and sin against an holy God—against the loving and forbearing Saviour of mankind.

This

This is briefly to be understood as waiting on God ; and *such* he has promised to hear and answer.

Elias prayed that it might *not* rain, and it rained *not* for the space of *three years*. Again he prayed that it *might* rain, and it did so. In short, every part of scripture gives us encouraging and happy examples, in various instances, what *prayer has done*, sufficient to know that the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth *much*." But then the *heart* must indite ; the lips can only be the *messengers*, or *servants*, to carry the request to the throne of grace. And though God knows our wants and necessities *before we ask*, yet we are commanded *to pray*. He chuses to be sought for in the appointed means, and he will relieve us in his own good time. Submission in *all* things to the will of providence is our duty ; at no time to murmur or complain. The moment so ungracious and indecent a temper harasses your mind, think not how severely you are dealt with ; but how much more so you deserve to be. And notwithstanding to
your

your reason, calamities may appear ever so dangerous, yet, if you wait upon God, with a modest dependence on his paternal love, and unbosom yourself to him, he has promised protection; and whilst it is bad with the ungodly, it shall be well with you. The great Author 'of all things can in a moment change the face of nature, though in her most depressing appearance. To the land that is choking up, he can order his heavens to drop down cool and fertile showers; as the psalmist says, He can make rain out of *dryness*. Only let us wait upon God in his ordinances, implore his mercy, and acknowledge his righteousness in *all* things, that the world may wear the smiles of heaven, and the clouds drop their fatness; so that with the natural rain the earth may bring forth her increase, and our souls be watered with, O Father of mercies, thy heavenly benediction.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT
LAMBETH CHURCH,
BEFORE THE
ROYAL GRAND MODERN ORDER
OF
JERUSALEM SOLS,
ON THEIR ANNIVERSARY,
THURSDAY, JULY 17th, 1788.

D



T O
GEORGE BYNG, Esq.
GRAND PATRON
OF THE
ROYAL MODERN ORDER
OF
JERUSALEM SOLS.

S I R,

THE partiality of that Society which is distinguished by your Patronage, first called upon me to preach, and afterwards to print the Sermon which now solicits the Protection of your Name.

If Institutions, such as these, derived no Honour from their own Excellencies, they certainly are entitled to Respect and Consequence, when deserving the Attention of the most worthy and exalted Characters; and among *such*, the JERUSALEM SOLS are proud to include yourself.

I beg to remain,

S I R,

With all possible Respect,

Your honoured Servant,

EDWARD BARRY.

S E R M O N III.

ECCLESIASTES, chap. xii. ver. 14.

*For God shall bring every work into judgment,
with every secret thing, whether it be good, or
whether it be evil.*

THE beauties of virtue never appear more amiable, than when they stand opposed to the deformities of vice. We see this fully evidenced in the person of King Solomon, the author of my text.

The *light* and *shadow* of his life served to set off each other in a very striking manner; and in proportion as at one view you are charmed and elevated with the brilliancy of his character, so at another you are equally shocked, and even disgusted.

To see him at one time in the most splendid meridian of goodness, of wisdom, and of power ; and to find him at another apostatizing all these, and foully straying into the wilderness of ignorance, intemperance, and sin, seems very much to harass the rational mind. Human nature seems to ask, how these gross inconsistencies can be ? how a man so favoured by God, so eminent in understanding, and so well fitted for all virtue and piety, could be drawn aside, like the weakest head, into the most stupid folly and guilt ?—Though this question, at first view, seems to confound our thoughts, and baffles not a little our reason, yet, if we take a deeper insight into the heart of man, especially as it is laid open by the sacred penmen, the problem is clearly solved.

“Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,” was the admonition of the great apostle ; and experience tells us, that men are never in so much danger as when they presume ; for confidence spurns at *caution* ; but where *caution* watches, there is seldom much danger. Solomon presumed that his
power

power allowed him to gratify his appetite, and that his wisdom could moderate it when he pleased; but the poison proved too much for the antidote: when he rested not on the arm of his God, but confided in *himself*—it was then he fell.

His soul was *too much swelled* with these acquisitions; they were too great for a mortal frame. Human nature had forgotten *who* she was, and *what* she was. It was the *soil* that spoiled the *seed*, and not the *seed* that hurt the *soil*: and when the ground of the heart had been thus contaminated—when he had so far gone beyond his depth, it was more than all his diseased virtues, and mangled wisdom, could do to save him; and had not the mercy of God at length bid him rise *once again*, he must have perished in his wickedness.

Convinced of his miraculous escape, and the grace of God still working more and more on his declining age, he exchanged the name of a king, for that of a preacher; and this book of Ecclesiastes is the solemn

recantation of that great monarch; who 'tho' he says to the young man, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee;"—but remember, says the preacher, "that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment:"—or, in the words I have lately read to you, "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

I have rather chosen to address this Society from the words of Solomon, because they are proud to dedicate their lodge "to him who first built a temple, and dedicated it to the great Creator of all things."

You profess to admire and venerate his virtues and learned documents; but there are others—the *abandoned*, the *ignorant*, and the *profligate*—who strive to justify their own turpitude, to scoff at virtue, and banter at religion, by exposing his follies. But to the dignity of the Christian revelation, not even the sins of its most zealous professors, either *have*, or could have been concealed.

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It is an open journal to every eye—a faithful portrait of every character.

Christianity cannot *approve*, but *condemns* the smallest sins. The impotent sneers then of the pitiable infidel at the sacred revelation, on account of the defects of human nature, and the imperfections of its most avowed friends, how mean and contemptible!—Because, were not Christianity, midst all supposed objections, *great*, and *enviable*, and *good*! would men so frequently put on the mask to affect its beauty?—No: rest satisfied in this truth, that there never was a *counterfeit*, unless there had been an original. Hypocrites themselves, therefore, so far from weakening the truths of Christianity, when rightly considered, are great confirmations of it. *Vice* can never condemn *Christianity*; but Christianity every where condemns vice, amongst all ranks and professions.

Having thus much commented on the author of my text, I shall only remark, that though great were his sins, yet *great* was his

his repentance—*great* his zeal and services in the cause of God—*great* were his instructions—with every flaw, *great* was this king-ly diamond!

Listen therefore, my brethren, to his awful address to you this morning:—He tells you, that “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every *secret* thing, whether it be *good*, or whether it be *evil*!”—Be it our duty then to improve the solemn notice—First, by briefly considering the necessity of a judgment to come; and, secondly, shewing how we should deport ourselves in civil and religious life, preparatory to that great day.

Little, I trust, requires to be said to you to prove the necessity of a judgment to come, since we find that even Heathens have admitted the truth; because, say they, in the nature of things, there is a necessity that vice *must* be *punished*, and virtue *must* be rewarded; neither of which are fairly exemplified in *this* life;—hence they justly conclude, “that it must be HEREAFTER.”

It

It is not in *this* life that the chaff is to be separated from the wheat, but in the *next*; hence then we see, that the evil are mixed with the good indiscriminately, and perhaps the vicious in a greater degree possessing what we think should be the reward of the *virtuous*. The artful villain screens his turpitude from the eye, and may pass in the *crowd* for *sterling merit*, while a more incautious transgressor is *banished*, if not *rooted out* from society, with *indelible ignominy*! The vile calumniator, who, like his *master*, assumes many shapes, *betrays* you with a *kiss*, and calls you friend!—but for all this, God judgeth the world. *Adversity* of any kind is often a blessing in disguise, while *prosperity* operates like a gilded poison. The wicked enjoy sin for a season; their punishment is only *deferred* till the measure of their iniquity is filled up. God measures all things on the basis of eternity; and the soul itself, being immortal, extends her *fears* and hopes to all eternity!—because God has declared, that “he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world.”

Having

Having thus briefly observed on the necessity of a judgment, I shall now apply myself more particularly to the good effects of *civil* and *religious* society, that we may provoke one another to every good work. When I speak of society, I mean not to include *that* which is founded merely on caprice or whim, or that whose only object is merriment or intemperance, or merely to drown a gloomy hour in the convivial circle of a bowl. No ;—these will be found eventually to be destructive even of *civil* society, and utterly subversive of all religious. But when I say civil and religious society, I mean such where the joys of civil and social life are made dependent on, and to harmonize with, the injunctions of *Christianity*. And societies, such as these, when *well* conducted, have a very good tendency to diffuse religious information to some, who would not have been, perhaps, at the pains to have acquired, *even what, they have*, in a different way.

To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before your God, should be the striking
ing

ing features of every *good Sol*, who is setting his face towards the new Jerusalem.

In this view, societies formed together—united with *one* heart—bent on one *good* cause—must be useful, as well in civil as in *religious* life.

And thus God, who judgeth all things, even *every* secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, will applaud the principles of so good an institution, if they are not *wilfully* corrupted and debased.

But then methinks a question is asked me, If the principles of this society be thus founded on *religion* and virtue, why do you keep them *among yourselves*? If useful to the temporal and future happiness of mankind, why are they cloistered from us as a *secret*? To this I shall answer, that the original end and design of such a secret, or such a separation from the rest of mankind, was principally to promote virtue, and suppress vice; and that the particular customs, rites, and ceremonies, observed in societies like these,

these, were designed to keep *out* the *unknown*, the wicked, and profane; and to put the members *themselves* in especial remembrance of their great obligations to virtue and piety.—We have many examples of this sort in sacred writ. The children of Israel, for instance, were separated, and set apart, as a distinct sect, or peculiar people, and were distinguished from the rest of the world by singular rites, and particular ceremonies. And thus again, when the Gileadites demanded of the Ephraimites, who were desirous of repassing Jordan, to pronounce the word *Shibboleth*, they, by a *singularity* of pronouncing this word, and calling it *Sibboleth*, though in *the night*, quickly *distinguished* them from their own brethren, and instantly slew them.

From these examples of antiquity, we may learn from the earliest ages of the world, that by the appointment of *God himself*, mankind divided themselves into several societies, each regulated by particular laws, as well as distinguished by peculiar customs.

But

But are there no members of this Society, midst all their professions, *bad* and *profane men*?—Undoubtedly there may be, as well in *this*, as in *other* good orders; but God, who judgeth the heart, and trieth the reins, will bring every work into *judgment*. But *bad* men are not *knowingly* admitted into the Order; nor afterwards, consistent with the laws, are wilfully retained. There are laws to *amend*, to *correct*, and to *expel* such; and *such* laws, for the *prosperity* and honour of the institution, should be put in *force*, without regard to *person* or *condition*. But it would be as *unreasonable* to condemn the *institution itself*, on account of a notorious profligate offender, as it would be the Christian religion, because *bad* men declare themselves Christians, or members of a Christian church.

I have only to observe, that there is nothing in the code of laws, as far as I know, or am taught, but what is *honourable*, *decent*, and religious, and is well fitted to answer many useful purposes in life. Let me then, my *brethren*, press home to your attention and
duty,

duty, in every respect, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called; and that your light may so shine forth, that mankind may see your good works. Let your zeal and attachment to the Order, *not* be evidenced by contention and strife, nor in malice, nor bitterness, but in virtue and brotherly love; and rest assured that he is the best Jerusalem Sol, who is making his best way to that holy city; who is doing his utmost to cast down the temple of Satan, but doing all in his power, both in public and private, to build up the temple of Jesus Christ. Indeed, too early and too diligent we cannot all be in this important work—too late it may.

We have no abiding city here, but seek one to come. We are lodgers only in this world, some for a few nights, some a few months, some for a few years. Let us make early provision for our journey to the new Jerusalem, before the cold griping hand of Death seizes us for eternity, and drags us, with all our sins, before the tremendous bar of an angry God!

The

The awful meeting .spare me the pain of now exhibiting—remember once more, and never forget that there is a judgment day hastening upon us, “when God will judge every secret thing, whether it be *good*, or whether it be *evil*.” Then will all your *secret* thoughts, your *secret* actions, whether *good* or *evil*, all will be proclaimed openly before assembled worlds!

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ—*all* characters, *all* kindreds, *all* societies, yea, *all* nations!

The stars shall fall from heaven! the sun, which now so gloriously animates, fertilizes, and illuminates the world—which diffuses his genuine influence over all *nature*, which so charmingly sends forth his beautiful rays, and rises in the *east*, which gives you the cheerful picture of his meridian in the *south*, and draws a cool and reposing curtain over the languid frame of nature, when he retires in the *west*—shall *no longer shine*, but be turned into an *awful darkness*!—the moon,

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that

that great lamp of our system, which borrows her lustre from the sun, and supplies that heavenly body—and cheers the traveller, and the distant mariner, ploughing on the furious seas—she will no longer please either by beauty or use, but affright you—*she will be turned into blood!*

The graves will open, and give up their dead, in solemn obedience to the great mandate, “ come to judgment!” and the archangel, declaring by the living God, “ that time shall be no more!”—then will the *insulted*, despised Galilean sit upon the throne, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel—*there* shall we see the great *Architect* of the world! And may it, my *brethren*, indeed, may it be the happy experience of all of us, that when this earthly lodge shall finally close, we may be admitted to the eternal one—of the new Jerusalem!—to have a glorious meeting with our grand head and *patron*, Jesus Christ, who is *one Lord*, of all patriarchs, prophets and kings : and having thus been *called off* from the toils and labours of life,

we

we may be worthy to be *refreshed* by the presence of our dear Redeemer, and receive *the wages* of those eternal joys, which were purchased by the sacrifice of his blood!

Now to God, &c.

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A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT THE

· ABBEY CHURCH, BATH,

1785.

E 3



(lxxi)

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
C H A R L E S,
BY DIVINE PERMISSION,
LORD BISHOP of KILDARE.

MY LORD,

AS it was your Lordship's Humility and Goodness, which, in the first Instance, appointed me to be your Chaplain, I must further trespass on those Virtues to pardon this Freedom.

The following Sermon was preached at Bath, where I learn your Lordship is at this Time, on account of your Health.

That the Almighty Favour may accompany the Means which are used for the Restoration of that Blessing, is the anxious Prayer of all those who have the Honour of being known to your Lordship; and as it is not less my Duty than it is my Happiness to unite in the same Zeal, your Lordship will be pleased to accept it, as the only Tribute of Gratitude and Respect for the very desirable Honour you have been pleased to confer on,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most obedient Chaplain,

And very dutiful Son and Servant,

London,
26th March, 1789. }

EDWARD BARRY.

S E R M O N IV.

COLOSSIANS, chap. iii. ver. 2.

*Set your affection on things above, not on things
on the earth.*

THE apostle having rectified some errors, both in doctrine and practice, amongst the Colossians, and laid the gospel as the foundation of every happiness, by which they were made free from the yoke of the *cere-
monial* law, exhorts them in this chapter to set their hearts on heaven, and withdraw them from the allurements of this world.—
“ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right-hand of God.”---As though he had said, “ Is Christ our *head* ascended? let our hearts and affections follow him thither.

ther. Is our best *friend* advanced to the highest dignity in heaven, and securing for all those who *love and seek him eternal blifs*? let us then, comparatively, despise this world, and all its *deceitful charms*; but let our *affections* be *wholly engaged*, and our souls nobly inspired, for the realms above, that where *he is, there we* may be also.

Light and darkness, good and evil, are *extreme opposites*; and equally so is an affection for *this* and a future life. It is utterly impossible to love *Christ*, and love the world. They never can be *blended*; nay, they must be *continually at war*. God has a kingdom *above*, Satan has a kingdom *below*, and we are subjects either of the one or the other. If of the former, our souls are fixed on things *above*; but if of the latter, our affections are set on the things of the *earth*.

To shew the glorious excellence of the one, and depict the miserable wretchedness of the other, shall be my humble attempt on the present occasion.

First,

First, then, the dignity of those things which are above, is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. These are the great and grand objects of your attention and affection.

God the Father—He who commanded *light* to spring out of *darkness*—who made *order* out of confusion—who made man out of clay, and gave him life from the breath of his nostrils—whose awful power shakes heaven and earth, and when the God of glory thunders, the *infidel* trembles---this is your *mighty* friend. He who inhabits all space, possesses all wisdom, and has made the heavenly bodies and the great world as one stupendous monument of his majesty!—this is the powerful Being who commands you to seek him with holy reverence and affection.—His Son Christ Jesus, who came from heaven in clouds of mercy, and suffered the complicated woes of a revengeful wicked world, and at last drank, even to the dregs, the very bitter cruel cup of death, with *bleeding* and extended arms—with the voice of *sweet melody* and miraculous love—in-
treats

treats your affection.—The Holy Ghost longs to introduce you to the Son; that Holy Spirit, whose divine influence descends like a dove, who is the messenger of every divine consolation, supplicates your esteem.

Strange condescension!—that the glorious Trinity, though different in office, yet one in essence, exquisitely happy in themselves, whom *angels* and *archangels* fall down and worship, should thus call for the affection of *perishing* and degraded mortals!

But however cutting this reflection to the god of the Heathen, or inconsistent to the corrupt, false reasoning of man, it is the *Christian's* holy pride to receive an invitation from God, sealed by the blood of Christ, and signed by his infallible apostles, to set his affections on this eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, and all-gracious God!

Apply, therefore, your whole thoughts, dedicate all your affection to this illustrious Being. Your capability, through Christ, of doing it *is indisputable*; for *life* and *death* are

are set before you, chuse which you will. "*Strive to enter in at the strait gate.*" *This*, with various other texts, speak your ability to accept, and an ordinary power to reject, the invitations of Heaven. And here you are called upon to set your affections on things above.

The holy scriptures, which are the bright lamps from heaven, tell us the beauties of that blessed mansion; they likewise are given us as a remedy for *every ill*. There is no situation of man, however desperate, no oppression, however violent, but Heaven has written for his use a cordial and a cure. Every trouble that attacks, and every calamity that affails, are either annihilated or diminished, if we look above.

Poverty, wretchedness, and grief, and all the direful trains of sorrow in her blackest and most desponding dress, appear *insignificant* to him whose affections are above. The cup of life, however imbibed, drinks pleasantly to such an one. If prosperity smiles *at his* gate, he looks gratefully to
the

the God who commanded it; if adversity frowns upon him, he knows the wisdom of God did well in appointing it. He sees that whatsoever befalls him is for the best, since *all* shall work together for his good. *His God* is his friend and redeemer, and he knows in whom he has believed; so that come upon him whatsoever will, as his affections are *not* set *on things on the earth*, it makes very little impression upon him. He knows his light afflictions, which are but for a season, shall work for him an eternal weight of glory.—Thus, is God his *refuge*, and heaven his sanctuary.—When the body is imprisoned through sickness, when the tongue cannot utter, the soul mounts with eager wings above, and brings a paradise below. He knows that after a few more throbbings of the pulse, he shall close his eyes, and be with God; for there his treasure is, and there his heart must be also.---- How ought then these glorious truths animate our souls, and determine us with zeal to set our affection on things so heavenly, so *grateful* to our love! This is *true philosophy*; this *robs death* of terror, and gives *angelic* valour in a *dying moment*.

But

But not so with those who fix their affection on things below. I mean not to say, that we are to be *devoid* of *friendship*, or to resist the impulses of affection, either to our relatives or acquaintance, for these are commanded; and a barbarian is that person who can be wholly untouched where such persuasive subjects invite his esteem;—but when we are commanded not to place our affections *here on earth*, it is meant to convey, briefly, these meanings—We must not possess an *inordinate* passion for them; we must not anxiously dote upon the perishing charms of this life, nor must our affections be rivetted to any object, or pleasure, so as to idolize it, and thereby rob a *jealous* God of his glory. Alas! what is there on earth that thus should cheat us of any extravagant love? Look round this vast world, and say, *Where is happiness?* Is it hid in the *cottage?* or, does it glitter in the palace? ask the inhabitants of both. Ambition and fear, torment the one; poverty and fatigue, *distress* the other. Is it found in riches, or fame? ask the wretched miser, whose every moment is distracted, either for the safety
or

or the accumulation of his wealth. Is it in fame? ask the thirsty soul *for praise*, how he pants for adulation—how he *trembles for applause*. Is it in *titled honour*?—alas!—a *greater name exists*. Do we strut with the phantastic plumes of family, or of learning?—we are kindred to the worms, and *must rot with the unlettered*. Is it in beauty?—what toil and pains it costs, what anxious *solicitude* to keep in tune!—how does a fever prey upon thy *damsk cheeks*? Is it in strength, or courage?—the disease of body makes thee feeble, and Death laughs at thee for a coward! Alas!—*where then is happiness*? Why should we *thus madly* place our affections on earth, where *calamity* and death are written in a legible hand on the face of *universal nature*?

See the fond parent, now depositing in the unwelcome tenement of the earth, the only object of his affection! Look at the *miserable* widow, bidding farewell to happiness—bedewing with *heart-felt tears*, the grave of her beloved husband!

There

There is scarce any thing but disappointment here below; some constant bar to *happiness*, either from the *cruelty* of our enemies, or the hypocrisy of *pretended* friends. There is a *constant* something *wanting*, either to make us happy, or prevent our *ruin*; and when even that coveted jewel arrives, some other lurking pain demands redress. If we even *imagine* ourselves happy, there is some *envious* fear that wishes to corrode it. If attached to our *acquaintance*, we are fearful of losing them; if *cherished* by recovering health, we presently forebode a *relapse*; if encouraged to hope for success in our various prospects, the pleasures we may one moment experience are overbalanced at another, either by *real* or *self-invented* fears. Experience is sufficient to teach us all that happiness *is not here*, and consequently unworthy of our affections. ---There is no *real, solid, uninterrupted*, joy;---there *cannot be in this vale of tears*. The countenance may perchance sometimes borrow the mask of happiness, and *the soul forget her sorrows*; but, then, it is

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only

only for *the sunshine* of a *summer's day*;---
the glooms of *night* return again.

All are candidates for happiness here, but none succeed. If any can say they have no troubles of their own, the *sad adversities* of their fellow-creatures should bring sorrow and *sympathy* to their breasts. But, alas! in every mortal frame there is more or less an inexhaustible theme for melancholy; every *soul living* is a natural heir to grief; and whatever schemes men may plot, or whatever palliatives they may use, to coax away reflection, there is a moment when conscience will storm upon them. Death has something to say to every man, and will be heard; "for men may live fools, but fools they cannot die!"---Death is the touchstone of our heroism. Then degraded mortal, thou wilt shrink with horror, and startle with confusion!---then all thy pomp and pageantry will be no more! The sensual objects of thy affection will now appear hideous to thy frightened soul; for thou hast hated thy Maker, nor didst thou set thy thoughts on heaven, on God, or righteousness. Then,
where

where are all thy earthly gew-gaws? *where* are thy darling objects? *where* are the idols of thy affection? can none *give thee comfort*? Where is Hope? she shakes her silver locks o'er thy distracted couch, and heaves a sigh!---Ah! how ungrateful are all *thy former charms*? how sadly do they *return thy great affections*? Now they throw off disguise, when *thou canst love them no more*; instead of cordials, they plant thorns *in thy pillow*; and instead of assuaging the *agonies of death*, they daringly upbraid thee *with thy folly*.

Here let us vail this melancholy sight, and learn a *serious lesson*.---Seeing, then, that all things are mortal; that kings, kingdoms, and people, the ornament of *their times*, and *the boast* of ages, are no more; that warriors and statesmen are *mouldered into dust*; and that every year, month, week, day, hour, nay, every minute, hastens our dissolution; that we are tenants here, at *most*, but for a *very few years*, let us take wisdom in time, and place our affections where we wish to *dwell for ever*:

to wean them from a *perfidious* world, and
dedicate them to heaven—to glory—to God
—to our Saviour.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED TO THE
CONVICTS under Sentence of DEATH
IN
N E W G A T E,
On SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 20th, 1788,
Previous to their Execution on the following Wednesday.

C

S. F. R. M. O. N.

STATIONER'S OFFICE OF GREAT BRITAIN



S E R M O N V.

ACTS, chap. xvi. part of 30 and 31 verses.

*Sirs, What must I do to be saved?—Believe on the
Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

THE preceding verses inform us, that while Paul and Silas were on their public ministrations, a certain damsel, possessed with an evil spirit, and who brought to her masters much gain by soothsaying, addressed them as servants of the Most High God, who pointed out the ways of salvation. She continued this language, we are told, for many days; at length St. Paul being grieved for her infirmity, commanded the evil spirit to depart from her. The masters of this damsel seeing that the hope of their gains

was now gone, in a fit of resentment, no doubt, seized Paul and Silas, and dragged them before the magistrates, and accused them of being troublesome men, and unfriendly to the Roman customs: in consequence of this charge, we find that a mob rose up against them; the magistrates themselves were base enough to tear off their cloaths, and commanded them to be beaten; and after they had received many stripes, they were sent to prison, the jailor receiving strict orders to put them into the *inner* prison, and make their feet fast in the stocks.

Picture to yourselves their miserable situation, and feel if *human* aid were only to support them, their evident distress and danger, on account, merely, of their fidelity to God, and undaunted zeal for his glory. But, instead of despair or murmuring, hear them, in the dismal dungeon, and at midnight, singing praises to God!—That loving and jealous father heard the ejaculations of his children, and instantly avenged their cause by sending an earthquake to rattle the very foundations of the prison; *swift as lightning*
the

the prison doors flew open; bars, bolts and chains all became loose! What a cordial proof is this of the efficacy of prayer and adorations to God in affliction! The jailor alarmed and terrified at what had happened, and the consequent death he must have suffered by the Roman laws, had the prisoners availed themselves the opportunity of escaping, in this panic drew out a sword, and would have become a suicide; he would have murdered himself, had not the powerful persuasion of his holy prisoner interrupted the horrid deed—"Do thyself no harm," said the great Apostle, "for we are all here!" In the midst of this consternation, and from an attempt so foul, he instantly enquires for salvation, and of his prisoners too, who were, a little while ago, under his menace and controul: but see him now trembling before them! addressing himself to them in the very respectable and submissive language of lords, or sirs, "What shall I do to be saved?" they said unto him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!"

A ques-

A question of such importance cannot fail to be peculiarly interesting to all of us! but especially to *you* my *dying fellow-creatures*.—The partition between *you* and eternity will literally remain but a very few fleeting hours! and *then* to be ushered into the presence of an angry God—*tremendous thought!*

Suffer me, then, to intreat your very watchful attention, while I speak further on the words lately read: the ceremony of language, and form, shall give way to the exigence and extremity of your case; I will attempt to speak the *plainest* truths to you:

1st. On the importance of the enquiry, “What shall I do to be saved?” and,

2dly. On the answer given, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!”

First then, “What shall I do to be saved?” and here you must remember that the *curse* of God is transmitted to you, even through
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the guilt of your parent Adam; he was the exact representative of what *we are*, made of the *same* materials, and liable to the *same* corruption; we should have done exactly what *he* did, hence his guilt is reasonably made ours; but supposing even your *innocence* in this matter, examine those sins immediately committed by your own selves—see the *ten commandments* solemnly delivered to you for the rule of your life, and God himself declaring to you, that he that offendeth in *one* point, offendeth in *all*; and recollect that the offence is not confined merely to the *act*, but Divine justice penetrates even the *desire*. Can you my fellow sinners in *particular*, nay, can *any* of us, but start with horror at the idea of meeting this scrutinizing, fierce judge? You cannot. “Curfed then is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them;” and is *quick vengeance* whetting in the brow of your insulted God, and bidding, as it were, this moment the thirsty blade of justice to glut her impatience on your eternal misery?—and do you feel *no agitation, no concern*, how you
may

may be sheltered from the wrath of *enraged* omnipotence?

I cannot cast my eyes on you, who are now *trembling* before me, without supposing, that a *restless agonizing* thought for your acquittal before your earthly judge, has been powerfully at work;—you have no doubt eagerly asked yourselves—your friends—your counsellors, “What shall I do to be saved from death temporal?”—What! no thought how to be saved from death eternal?—Where must I live when my body crumbles into dust?

Is my soul, the living principle, to dwell in ceaseless happiness, or be plagued with never-ending torments? If these interesting enquiries have not hitherto engaged your very earnest attention, may they now strike you with their serious importance!

It is not insipidly to say, That you are a sinner, and calmly ask, “What shall I do to be saved?” No, no, your language must be,
“Save,

“ Save, Lord, or I perish !”—“ God be merciful to me a sinner !”

Your mind must be deeply affected, and *concerned* in the enquiry.—If the probability of a reprieve from your Sovereign were suggested to you, through some possible duty on your part, methinks, body and soul would almost with frantic extacy enquire, what you could do to obtain it?—with that *same sort* of feeling—with that *same cordiality* and *fervent zeal*, does it behove you to enquire for salvation, from the eternal Sovereign of all things ; and the motive of this enquiry should not arise so much from the *dread* of punishment, as from a thorough conviction of having, both by sins of omission, and sins of commission, basely violated, all your life-long, the precepts of your God ! When *thus* you are bowed down, when *thus* the *hardened rebellious* heart is *melted* from the *painful* reflections of guilt, and a consciousness of your own unworthiness,—and that you merit nothing but the *wrath* of God ; then indeed, and *not till then*, will the question in my text, “ What shall I do to be saved,”
avail

avail you, nor truly will you be *inclined to propose it*: you may *possibly tremble* it with your lips, but the *soul* will not be *pierced*;—you would not apply to a physician, till you *felt your disease*; nor will you apply to God for mercy, till you are heartily *convinced*, and sorrowing for your sins.—Retire then into your gloomy cells, and take a mournful survey of your heinous offences against the great God of heaven and earth, before *whom* you are destined *so soon to appear*; who awfully declares, that the wicked shall be turned into hell!—May this sad truth sink deep, and work effectually on your minds, that the soul may be so startled with her danger, that she can find no rest by *reason of sin*: when this is your *happy case*, you will want no person, no argument, to second the necessity of your enquiry for salvation. *Would to God* that your souls were thus stormed with a sense of your guilt!

Well, do I see before me such a candidate?—are those tears teeming down your pale faces, the genuine tokens of repentance?—are you scarcely able from a real
sensi-

sensibility of your guilt and wretchedness to lift up your eyes to heaven, and say, God be merciful to me a sinner?—are you now gazing with a sort of despair, and from the bottom of your heart asking, “What you shall do to be saved?”—Is this the *only, this* the grand question, *really*, and in *good earnest*?—If I *dare* think so, or *you are convinced it is so*, and you put the *question* again—and cannot *help doing it*—and wait in *eager longing* suspense for an answer, I give you joy!—I almost congratulate you on your salvation!—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!”—Here is good news from heaven!—What! though thus deluged all over with guilt—bound fast with irons—too sinful to live among *sinners* themselves—and yet believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall be *saved*!—Yes, *this is true*; it is *God*, and not *man*, proclaims it by the mouth of unerring truth:—it astonishes you, no doubt—it seems too marvellous an act of pardon!—but suffer not your faith to stagger; and we will speak to you on this divine truth, as
was

was *secondly* proposed. " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved !"

But first let me premise, that the holy scriptures pointedly declare, That there is *no name* given under *heaven* whereby you can be saved, but by the name of Christ ; for if " Salvation was of *ourselves*, then did Christ die in vain ;" and where but from *him*, my unhappy friends, can you expect it ?—Where, but to the mercies of a *Redeemer*, can I refer you at this awful crisis ?—It is, you know, but a few hours you have to live !—could I be so ignorant then, so much an infidel, to suppose that any operations which you, or that *any of us* can perform, with minds polluted all *over* with the blackest guilt—and even our best services are impure before God !—*dare I to say*, that there is any *meritorious* action you can perform, which will appease the wrath of Heaven for the sins of your whole life ?—it would be at the peril of *my own* salvation if I did. No, my brethren ; it is your happiness and mine, that the *whole work* of redemption began and ended with the great sacrifice

sacrifice of Jesus Christ: had it depended upon ourselves—had we even *done all*, we should have been *unprofitable* servants! but, instead of doing *all*, even in our power, in heart, lip, and life, to the glory of God, we have rather reversed it, and dishonoured him in every one of these.

The heart of man is evil, and that continually, and above all things desperately wicked! And *you* must *know it*;—I call upon your testimony, without going your feelings by any particular allusion to your situation, and that will give an immediate decisive verdict!—Don't mistake me; I am not supposing that *you* are sinners above all Galileans!—No; "except we repent, we shall all likewise perish!"—let us take alike to ourselves all unworthiness, and infamy before God, and rest satisfied in this great truth, That the day of judgment will not be trifled with by a comparative detail of our virtues and vices, though *here on earth* it is absolutely necessary that our behaviour should be rewarded or punished as it bears a proportion to the one or the other; yet,

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before

before God, all must become guilty—God will be just, and every man a liar.

In the Old Testament you may read, “That the Israelites who were bitten by the fiery serpents, on account of their sins, were commanded to look up to the serpent of brags, which God commanded Moses to set up in the wilderness for their cure; those who looked up to it lived; but before that, many died.” This was a very exact and lively type of the Messiah that was to come; “for, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Hence, at the day of judgment, only two sorts of people will be distinguished—those who *accepted*, and those who *rejected* the means of salvation—and I wish it were in my power to fix effectually on your minds this *great truth*, That mankind will not be punished so much for the *disease of sin*, as for *rejecting* the *cure* offered for that disease, which is *alone in the blood of Christ*. “For this

this is the condemnation, that *light* is come into the world, and men love *darkness* rather than *light*, because their deeds are evil."

Behold then "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!"—Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!—Rend the very heavens with Hallelujahs for this gracious promise!

The devils believe through compulsive terror, but you must believe through joy and comfort in the promises of the Holy Ghost—to believe fervently in your hearts that Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven, and suffered on the cross, for the sins of a *rebellious world*; and, "that by his stripes you *are* healed."—If thus you believe, *all* your *interest*, *all* your dependence, will center *there*, and there *only*.—Well, if this in reality be your happy treasure, I am sure your heart will be there also; and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth *will*, it cannot fail to celebrate, and triumph in the wonders of redeeming love!—

Go, weeping sinners, then, and hide your guilty heads from the fury of the law of God; hide them under the atoning covenant, under the wings of your dear Redeemer!

See the loving Saviour longing to embrace his long-lost children!—Behold his flowing tears!—hearken to his expiring groans—it was all for you!

Fly to his expanded arms—he *longs*, he *waits* to be gracious!—Go, contrite beggars, to the riches of his grace, and take every supply for glory!—Stand off, thou proud-strutting Pharisee! *and* make room for that poor dejected *publican*—that Mary Magdalen—that wicked Manasseh—that persecuting Saul—that poor convicted criminal, *and even that thief*, shall this day be with me in paradise!—What a noble defence is this to put up at the bar of heaven!—what a glorious subject is this to speak on, “That the blood of Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin”—only believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and all this is yours!

Surely

Surely you are ready to say, " Lord, I believe—help thou my unbelief!"—encourage then, I pray you, by earnest prayer to the throne of divine grace, that God will further your desires more and more—*be restless* in prayer, that you may have some comfortable token before you go hence, and be no more seen—that your sins are washed away in the *rich streams* of mercy!

Here is the blessing of the *gospel*, That mercy triumphs over justice!—only let our triumph be *safely* founded, let us be made acquainted with the victorious Captain of our salvation—let us not raise up the banners of triumph on *presumption*, nor drop them through *despondency*.

I hardly know what more to say to you : I cannot give you faith, for that is the *gift* of God ; but whosoever sincerely petitions for it, will not be *denied* ; and whoever has it, *must be saved to all eternity* !

You see then, plainly, I trust, your own case ;—you are called upon to receive a perfect

fect cure for your disease :—*Sin* is *your* disease, and I should hope a *painful* one too—Christ, the divine physician, promises to cure you *now*, though it has gone so far! but you are to believe in his skill and *ability*; and as one smarting under his afflictions, to beseech him, with all *your* *might*, to come and heal you at the *eleventh* hour! —Come, Lord Jesus, then, come quickly to these thy dying children!—Lord, give them faith!—may they believe in thee! may they be clothed with thy righteousness—may they be saved!

And you who are now assembled, whether the thoughtless, or *sad* spectators of this affecting scene! remember, that nothing but *divine* *favour* has made the difference between these unhappy men and us—we are equally criminal, every one of us, before God, as they are! too soon you cannot yourselves apply for salvation—*too late it may be!*—The sudden seizure of death may not give your *unprepared* *guilty* *souls* even a precious moment to implore the mercy of that

that God, of whose name and worship, you, perhaps, live in open profanation.

Take a serious lesson, I implore you, from the example of these your fellow-creatures ; it was because they had not the *fear of God* before their eyes !—it was because they believed not in the Lord Jesus Christ, and did not wear in their lives the image of that holy Jesus, that God at length gave them over to a reprobate mind, and are thus “ become a monster to many ”—chained and fettered, as you now see them !—*Hideous sight !*—the wages of sin is *death* !—they are about to suffer death *temporal* ; and the only humanity you can now exercise to their souls, is to intercede with God, by fervent prayer, that they may escape death eternal !—and be it your immediate caution to guard against both ; “ Let him that *thinketh* he standeth, take heed lest he fall ! ”——The small interval between these men and death, forbids me to talk to them about the fruits of faith.—If they *have* faith, God will see and acknowledge their intentions in the *bud* ; but be it your duty to

manifest your faith and belief in Jesus Christ, by the blossom of a virtuous and holy life; or, as our Lord says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." At your *peril* it is, if you sin, on a presumption "that grace may abound."——To you at present I have no more to say, but to recommend to your feelings, and compassion, the wretched many of your fellow-creatures and sinners, who seem pining away thro' every want, within these dreary walls; and thank God that you are the givers, and not the receivers!

And now, my poor and miserable fellow-sinners, what more shall I say to *you*? how shall I bid you *farewell* to all eternity! I feel as a fellow-creature for the natural agitations of your mind, and could join your tears.—You are surrounded with nothing but gloominess—laden with heavy irons! and have this moment fixed before your eyes—awful sight!—the pattern* of what will soon contain your youthful bodies.

* The convicts under sentence are placed by themselves, and a coffin is put in the center, around which, before sermon, they kneel, and sing the sinner's lamentation.

All

All this is alarming beyond description ! but be not too *much cast down* ; it will soon be *over* ! cast your eyes beyond the gloomy confines of the grave !—look to your Lord, he hears your sighs !—soon will those galling fetters be knocked off ; you'll quickly bid adieu to all things mortal ; they are *now too little*, too *distressing* for your thoughts ; but lift up your hearts and voices to Christ your Redeemer, without ceasing.—What have you to *fear*, if Christ be your's ? Seek him, O seek him then, while he may be found, call upon him while he is near !—And now, blessed Saviour ! we commend these thy servants to thy tender mercies ! wash them in thy precious blood, and present them spotless to thy Father ! guide them through the valley and shadow of death !—send thy holy spirits to conduct them to Abraham's bosom — Lord Jesus receive their souls !

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

ST. JOHN'S, HACKNEY.

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

ST JOHN LOKNEY



S E R M O N VI.

ST. MATTHEW, chap. xxv. ver. 13.

Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

IN the common actions of life, when men are trifling with time, and deferring till to-morrow what can be done to-day, a very apt caution is given, and no person but readily assents to the truth of it, and says, "*Delays are dangerous!*"—If, then, this truth be admitted, and in the secular affairs of life, be in a great degree attended to, with how much more earnestness should this important advice be listened to, and, as it were, imprinted on the mind, to make us vigilant, and not to lose one moment in our preparations for eternity?

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The parable connected with my text gives us a most awful example that "Delays are dangerous;" and the great instruction deducible from it is, "Learn to *be wise by others' harm.*"

To set this duty before you as clearly and as forcibly as possible, I *will suppose* a case; and what so fit a one as that which our Lord has given in the instance of ten virgins, as figurative of the kingdom of heaven? five of whom were wise, and five foolish, who all went forth with lamps to meet the bridegroom.—The foolish took no oil in their lamps, but the wise did.—While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept! *At midnight* there was *a cry made*—and what was that cry?—It was the unexpected, it was the alarming sound—"Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him."—News extremely welcome, extremely longed for by those who were provided with oil; but how unwelcome, how terrible to those who had it not!—At midnight the bridegroom *came*; with *some* the time of slumber—when balmy sleep locks up with
sweet

sweet repose the wearied springs of life—when all is hushed up in quiet, in that dread silent hour of gloom and midnight, the bridegroom came—who could have expected him *then*? nay, who would not have been, as were those virgins, startled with surprize?—Or, if midnight be not the hour of retirement with some; if the course of nature be altered, and the habit so strangely vitiated, as to make it the moment of festivity and high conviviality, it were equally amazing to hear the sound—"Behold the bridegroom cometh!"—What an earthquake to every feeling!—to have the midnight gambols so rudely interrupted, the merriment so strangely stopt, and the cordial glees so affrightingly chilled!—The bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.—Those who had oil gladly arose, and trim'd their lamps; while the *foolish* (and foolish indeed they *must have been*) said to the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.—But the wise had forecast, and with *wisdom objected*, lest there should not be enough for both; but advised them to go to those who sold oil, and buy for themselves.

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So while they went to buy, the bridegroom *really came*.—Those who were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.—Sad disappointment, confusion, and dismay to those who afterwards came!—However, *earnestly* did THEY *beg for admission*, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us!—but in vain those *late* solicitations; disregarded were all *those intreaties*; the bridegroom would admit none but those who held themselves ready to receive him—he could not be supposed to *know* THEM; they did not bear any marks of regard to him, no attention, no signs by which he could distinguish either love or zeal, nay, or any common token of respect to him; but, on the contrary, a great contempt and negligence on this occasion; therefore the bridegroom is insulted, and declares he knows them not.—Had he known them as acceptable and worthy of admission to the marriage, they would have known him, and held themselves ready for the moment, like centinels on the watch; but as they slighted the *notice*, in vain are all their petitions.—They say, *Lord, Lord, open to us*; but the Lord says,

says, *I know you not*—and here comes the inference of the whole, in the exhortation of my text, “ Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh ! ”—You have already seen the confusion, disgrace, and punishment of the five foolish virgins ; you blame their conduct, while you applaud the wise : you say the foolish should have taken oil, for it was quite uncertain when the bridegroom might come ; and the insult the bridegroom felt at their indolence and indifference, justified an exclusion of their society from the marriage.—But put the case a little *nearer home*, and speak effectually to yourselves before the heavenly bridegroom comes.—At midnight, and sudden as lightning, a cry is made, the trumpet sounds with awful grandeur—Behold the bridegroom cometh !—go ye out to him.—Alas, how great the consternation to those who have not oil to trim their lamps !—with what trepidation and panic must they hear, and at *midnight too* ! the alarming summons !—Arrested thus, in the solemn vigils of the night, instantly to meet their God !—they cannot borrow

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preparations from others, lest by such deductions, if such were capable of being borrowed, or given, they who lent them should be found wanting ; it may, as with the virgins, be too late when the bridegroom is on the speed, to possess the great qualification for ourselves; while making the effort, the bridegroom may be actually arrived, or the messenger of death stare us in the face ! and we say then, Lord, Lord, open to *us*.—Take heed in time, that you are not answered as were the foolish virgins, “ Verily, I say unto you, I know you not !”

Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh !—he cometh as it were a thief in the night ; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, *at even*, or *at midnight*, or *at the cock-crowing*, or *in the morning*. If then scripture assures us, and example proves to us, the very great uncertainty when we may be summoned by surprize, and when not ready, need any further arguments be urged, either to convince or rouse you to the important duty of
pre-

preparing for the marriage supper? especially as your exact attention to it, will infallibly secure to you eternal happiness; your neglect of it, awfully threatens your eternal misery. At the most improbable time you see the bridegroom come—at *midnight*—may it not be equally uncertain to us?—Can you say when the cry shall be made?—can you tell the destined moment?—can you say *how* long it shall be ere the silver trump shall thrill into your ears, *Come to judgment?*—It may be *at midnight*, it may be *sooner*, or it may be, that the close of the next throbbing pulse shall *be the moment*.—Who can say it shall not thus happen?—In the midst of life we are in death!—These are serious, solemn truths, and *ourselves* have *witnessed*, perhaps, in several instances, their affecting reality.

The question then, the *grand* and interesting question is, Are we ready to go out and meet the *bridegroom*?—we have notice of *his coming*, and are we provided for the visit?—have we the oil ready? are our lamps trimmed? it may be too late at *midnight*

to do either; in fact, are we holding ourselves as much as possible in a state of fitness for the great debt of nature, and the *judgment that follows*? are we watching by fasting and prayer, by using every means of grace in public and private, making the cares and concerns of this transitory life entirely subordinate to the injunctions of Christianity? do we feel mostly attached to the interests of *this*, or a *future* life? in short, as dying persons can we declare, that, to the utmost of our power, we renounce pride, covetousness, and all the outward and inward vices of the soul? are our minds *determinedly bent* on heaven, and heavenly objects, and adorning as much as possible the gospel of our Redeemer?—If we cannot answer these faithful questions in the *affirmative*, at least in a great measure, we are not fit to meet the bridegroom; we are not trimmed, nor fit to meet our Saviour, unless wearing in our temper and inclinations the wedding garments of *Christ's righteousness*.

These are subjects and enquiries of the last concern; they importunately press home
for

for your very immediate and attentive exercise, lest coming suddenly the master find you sleeping—*wrapped up* in the sheets of *indolence* and *delay*, fettered to your sins, sleeping the sleep of death, till amazed with fear—astonished—alarmed from your carnal fatal slumber, by the tremendous cry, “ Behold the master cometh !”

Watch therefore ; seize the present moment for the *great business* ; be on your stand of duty ; let no device, stratagem, or conspiracy, (for many will present themselves) divert or influence you to *quit your post*. Be like soldiers on their guard—you will soon be relieved ;—every moment brings the master *nearer*. Trim up your lamps with *fresh oil*, the bridegroom may not be far distant. Step not one moment off your caution and from your duty, lest that be the very moment when he cometh ; and while you are *getting* oil to trim your lamps, the gate may be shut, and yourselves shut out—*for ever* excluded the happy society above !—But stand true to your trust—be jealous over

your ownelves—expect the master every moment ; and should he delay a few minutes longer than our decaying dying form has a right to expect, you will still be ready. It is certain *he will* come ; and better watch many hours in hopeful anxiety, than *pre-*
fume on the certainty of one minute's absence ; lest, as in the occurrences of life, so it may prove in death, that it was the very minute—the *unexpected, unfortunate* minute when we were wanting, when our master called us, and when the bridegroom really came ;—but let us every day and hour ask oil from heaven, and trim up our lamps, so that whether at *even*, or at *mid-*
night, or at *cock-crowing*, or in the *morn-*
ing, whensoever the cry is made, “ Behold the bridegroom cometh,” we may have no oil to seek ; but with joy, and with our lamps trimmed, go forth to meet him, and be admitted to the marriage-supper of the Lamb .

Now to God, &c.

A S E R.

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AFTER
O R D I N A T I O N,
IN THE
PARISH CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK,
IN THE
I S L E OF M A N.

S. F. R. M. O. N.

O. R. D. I. N. A. T. I. O. N.

I. R. I. S. H. C. H. I. L. D. R. E. N.



I. S. I. E. O. F. M. A. N.

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S E R M O N VII.

I TIMOTHY, chap. vi. ver. 12.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, wherunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

SAINT Paul in this, and another epistle, has been setting forth to Timothy the most wholesome lessons for his ministerial conduct; exhorting him from the purest principles of affection and duty to avoid various evils (which the imperfections of nature and youth might be liable to) and directing such a rectitude of doctrine and manners, as would insure him a glorious reward hereafter.—“Fight the good fight of faith,” says this

this great apostle, "lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." My present design is,

1st. To enquire what is meant by the phrase, "Fight the good fight of faith."

2dly. How and through whom we are to lay hold on eternal life,

3dly. Make some general observations from the text,

First, then, "*To fight the good fight of faith,*" plainly implies that we have something to fight against; that there are opponents and adversaries to our Christian warfare; and these must be considered as three, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. And it appears very evident and rational why they are enemies to those who follow after faith and godliness, if we consider that the very nature and principles of Christianity, from its first establishment to the present moment, are every where averse to the corrupt rea-

reasoning and passions of degraded nature.— Could religion applaud and espouse the fashions of this world, it would meet with no sort of opposition; could every darling vice find an asylum there, how many sincere worshippers would it have!—The *learned* and *unlearned*, the *rustic* and *courtier*, would pay their constant adorations to it.—Beauty and deformity would bear the same countenance—the miser and spendthrift would be unanimous—and the politicians would not disagree.—In fact, all nature would croud the gates of so *obbliging*, of so *delightful*, of so *palatable* a religion!—But, my friends, it is *not* so with the religion of *Christ*—it tears up by the roots your sinful appetites, and gives a fatal blow to every lustful wish; it points out human nature in a most pitiable light; humbles every proud sentiment of *the creature*, but exalts and glorifies the perfections and goodness of the Creator!

Seeing, then, that religion thus censures and condemns fallen nature, we cannot in the least wonder that all her powers, the world,

world, the flesh, and the devil, should furiously oppose any thing so inimical to her depraved wishes.

Our blessed Lord, when on earth, was not exempt, but submitted to suffer; even unto death, the insulting usage of those combined enemies to his doctrine and purity; and since he himself has declared that his kingdom was *not* of *this* world, his disciples and followers must expect various trials and oppressions: and our Lord tells them, that in the world *they shall have* tribulation; and it seems almost of necessity that it should be so; for light and darkness cannot agree—we cannot serve two masters.—If we *are enlisted under* Christ's heavenly banner, we have *a roaring* enemy against us—many against us on earth, but *all, all* on our side in heaven.—If Christ and his apostles felt the reproaches of a sinful world on account of the doctrines they taught and practised, what reason have we to expect to be wholly exempt from the various hatreds of those adversaries to our Christian faith?—Are we therefore to be dis-

dismayed, if oppressions of any sort should come?—No, God forbid!—let us consider it an *honour* and privilege that we have even the faintest marks of suffering for righteousness' sake.—Apprehend no danger in the service of your heavenly master—take encouragement and example from all the suffering saints and martyrs, and fight the good fight of faith in whatever manner Heaven may please to call on you, whether as a preacher, or a hearer. In whatever situation you are placed, there are not wanting opportunities of evidencing your zeal for Christianity, and being courageous to fight against sin, however pleasing it may appear for the moment to lay down arms and join your tempting foe—and the enemy, perhaps, is never gaining a better advantage, than when we are halting between two opinions, whether to *reject*, or *gratify*, any corrupt wish his artful invention may have represented to our mind; for the adversary we are told, goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and watches every unguarded moment of the heart to give the *gilded poison*. How then does it behove us

to be like *soldiers* on the watch, that he gain no advantage over us? and to put on the whole armour of faith, that we may be able to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil?

To fight the good fight of faith, is to get so far a mastery over our unruly wills as not to be led captive by them; and it carries something more than *negative* virtues; for it calls upon us to be faithful soldiers, and *active* servants, in the cause of our master—in fact, to combat every thing unfriendly to the interests of religion, and to manifest the purity of our faith, by a religious walk on earth; looking to God, and imploring his almighty aid to support us under every difficulty and trial, and to bring us off more than conquerors: For, remember that your enemy is chained; and though he may roar, he cannot destroy; he may tempt, but cannot overcome.

By fighting, therefore, *the* good fight of faith, we are to understand our *most vigilant* and steady exertions to cast down the kingdom

dom of Satan—to subdue, as much as possible, every corrupt affection—to bear patiently every trial of our faith—and so doing, lay hold of eternal life:—which brings me to the second proposition,

How and through whom we are to lay hold on eternal life.

“Search the scriptures,” says Christ, “for in them ye think ye have *eternal life*, and they are they which testify of me;”—and every part of scripture assures us, that “Christ is the resurrection and the life—that our life is hid with Christ—and this is *life eternal*, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent—For as in Adam *all* died, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive.” It is, therefore, *thro’ the merits and intercession* of Christ that we must finally expect *eternal life*; for *other foundation* can no man lay:—and this joyful consideration should spur us on to run that race which he has set before us; not to *delude our souls* by a state of carnal security, and thinking, that as Christ died for us, and satisfied

tified the law, that our title to glory is purchased, though we continue in a sinful and careless course of life. No, my friends—*life* and *death* are set before you; chuse you *which you will*. If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him:—that is, if Christ be your God, and from him you expect eternal life, you cannot fail to manifest the sincerity and zeal of your faith, by a *holy* and *religious* life; but if the contrary, you will favour of the things of death, by doing the works of your father the devil. Christ has offered eternal life to those only who diligently seek him—to those who turn from the ways of sin and Satan to serve the living God. Not that he reaps any *honour* or *advantage* by your *best* performances; for after you have *done all*, you are *unprofitable servants*; yet it is the will of your heavenly Father to be sought for in the way and manner he has appointed. “Seek, and ye shall find—knock, and it shall be opened.” Surely the terms on which *eternal life* is offered are very easy;—what more gracious than to ask, and receive? what more glorious than to be ransomed from the slavery and bondage

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age of *eternal death*, and be made partakers of *eternal life*?—for “his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths *are peace*—his yoke is easy, and his burden light—cast therefore thy care upon him, for he careth for thee.” Consider how dearly he purchased *eternal life*; read the tragic history of his sufferings; and whilst your soul bewails the occasion of his cruel death, let it animate your hearts with transporting gratitude!—Lay hold, therefore, on eternal life, whereunto *thou* and *the whole* posterity of fallen Adam are called; but if you refuse it, remember you have no other prospect than *eternal condemnation*. Take blame and confusion to *yourselves only*, if at the great and solemn day of accounts, instead of being welcomed to life everlasting, you are sentenced to *death eternal*!—And how will the recollection of having basely rejected the kind offers of Heaven, sting your consciences, and *aggravate your guilt*? And there are seasons when it may be too late. The day of grace may be *for ever* past, and the sentence of Heaven *irrevocably fixed*. It was too late for

the rich man to *forewarn his brethren*; it was *too late—alas!*—to *advise himself*;—the gates of *eternal life* were *for ever shut* against him.—Embrace, therefore, the glorious offer, whilst it is in the way; remember there is no repentance in *the grave*—that awful mansion!—where you and I are hastening to: and when the cold hand of Death may bring the awful summons we *cannot tell!* Let us therefore accept to-day the free offer of eternal life, *through the merits of our Saviour—to-morrow may be too late!*

Behold now, therefore, the Lamb of God intreating thee to accept it!—witness with astonishment the humility of God standing at the door of your heart to gain admittance, and hear him declare, “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner—I would not that one should perish, but that all should come to everlasting life.” See your God *weeping* over Jerusalem, and declaring, “how often he would have gathered them together, *but they would not*—why will you die, O house of

of

of Israel?—come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest—for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed on *him* should *not* perish, but have everlasting *life*; and he that *cometh unto me* I will in nowise cast out.” Are not these encouragements? are not these invitations of the most kind and pressing nature?—Oh! let it not be said to you in the last day, *that* you would not go to him that you might have eternal life; let not all these blessed invitations of Heaven, by being disregarded, be turned into *as many curses*.—Trample on, and abuse no longer the tender mercies of your Redeemer—he longs to meet you as a *Saviour*—embrace him with all your heart, and with all your might; for should his love be turned into hatred, and instead of a Saviour he should become a *terrible Judge*, how awful, how alarming would your situation be!—neither the rocks nor mountains could hide you from his *tremendous frowns*!—for *he will judge* the world in righteousness. Seek, therefore, this immortal gift; the Redeemer has it to give. Be

it your immediate concern faithfully to implore it, that he may present you spotless before his Father.

I shall now finish this discourse with some general remarks.

We are called on in the text, "to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." I trust it has appeared to you, that not only Timothy, but ourselves likewise are equally called on, in our several stations, to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life, whereunto it has pleased God, through Christ, to call us.

When our Lord said to his disciples, "will ye also leave me?" they said to him, "To whom shall we go, for thou hast the words of *eternal life*?" I have therefore endeavoured to shew how, or in what manner, we may obtain it, and have exhorted you to the same;—it remains now to make a few remarks on that part of my text which
says,

says, "and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

I appeal to your consciences whether you have not this morning made a *solemn profession*, before many witnesses, "that you believed in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, *our Lord*; and that he sitteth at the right-hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he will come to judge the quick and the dead; and that you believed in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

My brethren, these are *good* professions; and if uttered by *the heart*, as well as the tongue, we have *indeed* made a *good* profession before *many* witnesses; but if not, *tremble to utter that solemn mockery!*—It is not for me to say—to *your own master* you *stand or fall*. Allow me to warn you, however, and tell you, that though *man* is not privy to your thoughts, the Almighty pe-

netrates the inmost recesses of your soul; and to his *all-piercing* eye, from whom no secrets are hid, do you lay yourselves open when making this very *solemn profession*. I hope it will never be said of you, that “this people draweth nigh unto me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.” And we are told, that many at the last day will say, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and done many other things,” to whom I will say, *depart, I never knew you?* Judge for yourselves, then; if out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, *happy, happy*, are you.

To guard against a constitutional fire in devotion, on the one hand, and the cold formality of a Pharisee, on the other, is the concern of every sober-minded professor; and I should hope, that for the greater part of this congregation it is now my happiness to be addressing such;—and whilst preaching to you, I hope preaching *to myself*; and recollecting the very solemn engagement and profession lately made by me, before God, in this sacred temple, and in
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the presence of many witnesses, when about to receive the great commission—"to go and preach the gospel;"—and though awful as that charge is, yet delightful too.

While God alarms the indolent, the flattering, the *unfaithful* labourer, that at his hands he will require the blood of those who are lost—of those sheep whom he failed to feed—of those who were in carnal security—because he sounded not the trumpet, nor warned them to make ready for the battle of the Lord!—woe to these shepherds, woe to those who have shunned to declare the whole counsel of God;—but to those who have not been ashamed of the gospel of Christ—who will speak in their great Master's name to the consciences of men, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear—who are neither awed by the great, nor flattered by the poor—who are walking worthy of their vocation and high profession, redeeming the time, and winning souls to Christ—to *such* God has given the highest honour, and has promised his continual support in all their diffi-

culties, whether from the world, the flesh, or the devil. And since they are particularly exposed to these trials, it very much becomes you, my brethren, to offer up your most fervent prayers to Heaven, that God would support them, and make useful their labours; and be it your duty to administer, all that you can, both to their spiritual and temporal comfort.—May they give you the faithful alarm, and may you listen to it as the voice of *eternity*; so that when it shall please the Almighty to call both to an account, and face to face, they may stand clear from your blood, and meet you in judgment, not in sorrow, but with joy.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

FITZROY CHAPEL,

On GOOD-FRIDAY, 1786;

AND AT THE

P A R I S H C H U R C H

OF

SAINT MARY-LE-BONE,

On GOOD-FRIDAY, 1789.

ST. E. R. M. O. N.

VITEROY CHAPIN

ON GOOD-FIELD, 1890

H. O. R. O. H.



ALICE MARY-LE-JOHN

ON GOOD-FIELD, 1890

S E R M O N VIII.

ST. JOHN, chap. xix. part of ver. 30.

——— *It is finished!*

WE are called upon this day very seriously to contemplate on the cruel sufferings of incarnate Deity, when he died upon the cross for the sins of a rebellious world.

The circumstances of his death are so clearly attested by such a cloud of witnesses, both sacred and profane, that any attempt to enforce the reality of them, by offering to produce, on this occasion, any new argument, or testimony, for their support, would shew in myself much absurdity, and betray in me unbecoming doubts, both of the wisdom, and even common principles of belief in the congregation I am addressing.

Prefuming,

Prefuming, therefore, that the history and crucifixion of our Saviour are truths beyond all possibility of doubt, and croud-
ed with more *indisputable, decisive, and in-
fallible* testimony, than it is *possible* can fall
to the share or support of any truth that has
already happened in this world, or ever can
happen, I shall now endeavour to speak to
you on the important words of our great Me-
diator, "It is finished!"—a sentence so truly
big with every meaning that can astonish
and pierce the heart of man, makes it our
particular interest at this time to consider
the *occasion of his death*, and the *circumstan-
ces attending it*.

And first, to shew you the occasion or
cause of his death in brief words, or even
gesture—look on yourselves; it was our sins
that pierced him to the tree!—The sins en-
tailed on us by our fallen parents *alone* call-
ed for *innocent blood*—"In the day thou eat-
est thereof, thou shalt *surely die*!"—we did
eat; and the fatal sentence had been surely
exercised, had not the glorious promise,
"that the seed of the woman should bruise
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the serpent's head," appeased the insulted justice of Heaven, and so rescued a world from death most bitter—from death eternal!—and from that moment, till the coming of our Saviour, has that promise been kept alive by types and shadows; the scaffolding has been guardedly kept up, till the great building was completed.

Moses, in the institution of the passover, where the paschal lamb was to be slain, had an immediate reference to the divine sacrifice. When the brazen serpent was set up in the wilderness, and whosoever had been bitten by a serpent, and only looked at the serpent of brass, lived, was expressly figurative that the Son of Man should be lifted on the cross; and whosoever looked on him should live also. The many sacrifices for sin, proclaimed that without shedding of blood there was no remission.

The great type, however, was the day of expiation and atonement, enjoined by God, under a great penalty, and observed with exactness, both by the high-priest and people.

ple. It was on this day alone that the high-priest went by himself into the Holy of Holies; and besides the propitiation he was to make for himself and his house, he made an atonement for the people by two kids of the goats for a sin-offering, which he presented before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle. Indeed, there is one regular chain of events throughout the Old Testament, which prefigure Christ as the redeemer of mankind from their sins. The prophet Isaiah represents the Messiah that was to come, as a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; oppressed and afflicted, wounded and bruised, and cut off out of the land of the living; that he was numbered with the transgressors.—The prophet Zachary foretells even the price for which he was betrayed, thirty pieces of silver; and that they should look on him whom they pierced;—and the prophet David, that they should pierce his hands and feet!—Sin, and sin only, was the occasion of the great Redeemer visiting this world.—His whole life, from the manger even to the cross, was a pilgrimage of sorrow and distress; he was often
seen

seen to weep, but never smile; it was *sin occasioned both*;—and, after living in poverty and contempt—though hourly and every moment exercising himself in doing good, either to the mind or body, he was at last put to a cruel death, to deliver us from the wrath to come, and to secure our eternal redemption.

But, do you enquire how justice can be satisfied in the death of the innocent for the guilty?—recollect that our offence was *infinite*, and nothing but an infinite being could atone. Perfection was required of the beasts set apart for sacrifice; and as they suffered for those sins they never could possibly commit, it clearly proves that *innocence* was required in the victims;—and *such* were to be representatives of an innocent person—even the Lamb of God, without spot, and without blemish. We may exchange riches for poverty—liberty for slavery—and endure danger and hardships, for others to enjoy safety and tranquillity.—It is truly not the policy or interest of our selfish nature thus to do, and much less to yield

yield our own lives as a ransom for others ; but, nevertheless, where-ever such a noble, magnanimous soul existed, who could refrain to admire, to adore it !

Besides, if it were unjust that an innocent person should suffer for the *guilty*, the very idea of a sacrifice would be quite destroyed ; which requires that the innocent should suffer for the guilty—and such we behold in the Son of God !—and hence introduce the Saviour of the world as betrayed, condemned, and crucified.—See, then, the base traitor Judas betraying into the hands of murderers his dear master, for the paltry bribe of thirty pieces of silver !—To *hear* of such vile treachery from a disciple, and a professed friend, is insupportable !—our nature seems frantic with disgust !—He did not come like an *open* enemy, but borrowed the token of love ; and in kissing him, betrayed him !—His other disciple, Peter, denied him ; and in his great distress the rest forsook him, when they should have been administering comfort to their dying master, now in the hands of a merciless,

less, godless rabble, who, with insulting wantonness and contempt, spit on the God of glory—buffet him, and strike him!—Hence he is carried before the Roman governor, bound as a culprit—before him he is accused by the chief priests of many things—and yet how much favour our Saviour found, and justice too, in a Gentile heathen!—how much severity and infamous barbarity in the high priests of his own order and nation !

The Roman governor heard all the strained, false accusations against Jesus; and though the Deity could instantly have cleared himself, and with one breath have silenced a world of foes, yet he does not defend himself, but remains, as it were, passive.—Pilate saw his innocence; he felt his innocence; and declared, repeatedly, that he found no fault with him;—but the rabble cried out the more; it increased their bloody rage; when they saw truth and equity in the countenance of the governor, they then cried out vehemently, Crucify him. In vain did Pilate ask, Why?—what evil hath he

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done?—He baffled them there; for none could be found.—But he was frightened by their clamour, lest they should accuse him before the Emperor Tiberius as a traitor, and false to his trust, should he let the Saviour go.—So the fury, the terror of the people prevailed on Pilate to free a murderer—and deliver up the Son of God !

Watch him in the garden *praying* !—his soul weary with sorrow, even unto death ! see him betrayed, and the insulting usage of an unfeeling mob !—And now witness the last tragical, affecting scene, only because he declared himself to be the Son of God —They first torture him with whips before they crucify him !—a custom among the Jews—and now they again deride and mock him ; they put a scarlet robe on him, a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his right-hand—all to burlesque him as king of the Jews ; and, after exercising every possible ridicule of this sort, they pull off those garments, and put on his own ; and then compell him to carry, faint as he must have been, a heavy cross to the place
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of execution, assisted by one Simon, a Cyrenian.—A great number of people followed him, and many bewailed him.—When they arrived at Calvary, or Golgotha, both of the same signification, they offered him the bitter refreshment of vinegar mixed with gall, still to insult him more!—And now the horrid punishment increases—enough he felt before—He is condemned to die upon the cross; a Roman punishment, distinguished for its exquisite pain and ignominy, and which afterwards, when Roman emperors became Christians, was forbidden, out of due and pious respect to the manner of our Saviour's death.

It is described by writers, that a piece of wood was erected, which was crossed with a bar on the top; the body of the person fastened to the main piece of wood, the arms extended and nailed to the cross bar, and the hands and feet likewise nailed. Thus was the dear Immanuel fixed. See the tender Saviour pierced with nails in those parts of his body which are so very nervous, and so susceptible of torture, and yet delaying

death!—Bitter cup indeed he drank before; well might he pray his Father if it were possible to pass it from him.—Here he is left racking, and weltering in his blood—none to pity, none to condole him; but all reviling—even a thief who suffered with him. Alas! how keen must have been his torture!—how acute his pangs!—Picture to yourselves the affecting exhibition—what will you think of sweating great drops of blood with pain?—see the mangled Deity worried thus to death, till human nature sunk down beyond description!—gored thus barbarously, he groans in the severest moment, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” hiding as it were his omnipotence, and as a human being in excruciating agony, saying, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”—And at this time they either understand him not, or in the agonies of dissolution wish to distress him, by calling for Elias, saying, “Let us see whether Elias will come to save, if it were possible, this pitiable spectacle of sad misery, lingering a death of complicated injustice, and savage barbarity.” The Saviour in this moment feels
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all nature drooping, and says, or rather sighs, "I thirst." They then filled a sponge with vinegar, and when Jesus had received it, he said, "It is finished!—and bowed his head; (expressive of his obedience to death) and gave up the ghost."

Thus ended the human nature of this divine and glorious character!—the melancholy account here ends!—Shall fictitious tales command the heart to weep? and shall not the doleful narrative of such unrelenting cruelty to our greatest friend command a deluge of genuine tears to flow?—they well become a feeling grateful mind. —The heart bleeds, and almost refuses comfort, the soul chills with horror, all nature seems aghast, to see a God thus derided!—a Saviour thus murdered!—No resentment, no harsh language is heard;—he yielded to the arms of death without murmuring, and in the last energetic pangs he prayed for the authors of his murder, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

This is the great character whose funeral sufferings you commemorate this day ; and the only cordial your oppressed and sorrowful minds can accept, is the dying language of Calvary, "that it is finished." The great errand of salvation is done ; malice is now silent, and death has finished cruelty—all is finished.

Gracious glorious news from our crucified God!—the pains of hell were laid upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.—"It is finished!"—The atonement is settled and accepted, and we are called upon to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. He has freed us from the tyranny of the law, and directed our footsteps to Canaan's ground. Let us walk therein, and not crucify him afresh, by continuing in our sins. He trode the wine-press alone, and none was with him.

The dying language of Calvary is, "It is finished!"—our existence this morning proves it—all nature wears the richness of his blood!

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The joy of heaven is, that it is finished! —let us then, as sinners, and commemorating the salvation offered to sinners through Christ, of which these sacred elements are his humble and appointed representatives, shew that we have love and gratitude to celebrate the memory of our divine Master, which the night before his death he consecrated in the sacrament of his supper, by which we obtain remission of sins, and all other benefits of his death and passion.

Now to God, &c.

1853

1. The first of the year was a very cold day, with a heavy frost, and the wind from the north-east. The snow lay deep on the ground, and the trees were all covered with it. The children were very happy to see the snow, and they went out to play in it. They made many snowballs, and they threw them at each other. They also made snow angels, and they walked in the snow. The snow was very soft, and it was very white. The children were very happy to see the snow, and they went out to play in it. They made many snowballs, and they threw them at each other. They also made snow angels, and they walked in the snow. The snow was very soft, and it was very white.

1853 12

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT
ST. MARY-LE-BONE CHURCH,
In FEBRUARY, 1788;
OCCASIONED BY THE
DEATH of a LADY.



S E R M O N IX.

ST. JOHN, chap. xi. ver. 25.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

THE design of this chapter is to shew us God's power in ordering every thing for the best, to teach us resignation to the Divine will, to console us in our sorrows here, and animate us in the views of eternity.

Lazarus, we find, had been sick at Bethany; his sisters Mary and Martha, tenderly feeling for the safety of their brother, on this occasion apply to our Saviour, (who was not many miles distant from the town) and say to him, " Lord, behold he whom thou
lovest

loveſt is ſick.” And though we find that Jeſus much loved both ſiſters and brother, yet he continues at leaſt two days in the place where he was, before this omnipotent phyſician makes any talk of going to the relief of his favourite Lazarus ; and yet his diſciples diſcourage him from going *at all*, on account of the malicious Jews watching every opportunity to kill him. He firſt confutes *their objections*, and then purpoſes going to *wake* his friend Lazarus, whom our Lord at that time well knew was dead, though he calls it ſleeping ; and when Jeſus arrived, Lazarus had already lain *in the grave four days*. Martha pathetically addreſſes her Saviour, by ſaying, “ Lord, if *thou* haſt been here, my brother had *not died* ;” but yet fearing to ask, and trembling with hope to receive an immediate exertion of power, by re-animating her darling brother, with zeal and humility ſhe thus ventures to betray the ſecret *pantings of her ſoul*, and ſays, “ but I know, that *even now*, whatſoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.” Jeſus ſaid, “ thy brother ſhall riſe *again*.” Martha ſaid, “ I know he ſhall riſe

rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Our Lord does not chide the natural distress of Martha; he well knew the import of her language, and what *heart-felt wishes* were couched in every phrase. He does not rebuke her *now*, though such faithless importunity would ill become her on *any other occasion*. The divine Parent saw the genuine tears of grief, he heard the *tremulous tongue* of sorrow, and beheld the pale cheeks of *sharp distress*. The lovely compassionate God, who so often wept himself, feels for the troubles of Lazarus's disconsolate sisters; he feels tenderly for all tribulations; and perhaps none more cutting, none which more derange and affect our frame, than the loss of our beloved friends!—it pierces the heart, it conquers philosophy, it steals from all a tear, and commands the most heroic bitterly to bewail!—It is the assurance only of meeting one day again, that keeps the mind in order from sadness, melancholy, and despair.—We shall rise again!—*this* is joy.—*Never* to meet *again*, how insupportable!—you cannot

not endure the thought!—What! *never* more to see that lovely form, *never* again to hear that winning tongue, *never* more to witness the thousand charms of my only, my best, my dearest friend!—human nature stands appalled—she cannot bear it!—But when the soul is encouraged to look beyond the gloomy confines of the grave, how noble, how cordial is the prospect!

It is Christ then only can be your theme, and friend. He is “the resurrection and the life; and he that believeth in him, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”—He is the resurrection and the life!—and however strange it may appear to our degraded reason, yet certain is the truth that we must rise again; —“they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life—and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation.” So that there are two resurrections scripture positively assures us—the one to glory, the other to misery. True it is, our *limited* wisdom staggers;—it cannot account how the scattered atoms of so many millions, and of so many nations, heaped and intermixed
one

one with another since the creation of the world, shall, in a moment, as it were, be compact and re-united!—human sagacity cannot fathom *so sublime a fact*;—but shall we, because unequal to so great a truth, presume to deny it?—This were *unphilosophical* and impious indeed!

To go no further *than moral* enquiries, how are the most *inquisitive* geniuses puzzled and defeated? To give reasons how soul and body are connected, and by what laws they preserve their union, defies the proudest stretch of letters.—If then the *realities we experience* thus challenge and astonish every enquiry, it should serve to temper our minds for greater truths, and deck our language with modesty. Cannot he who reared the frame at first, place it together again? and like the desolation of winter in the garden and the field, when the God of nature commands both to be re clothed with verdure, when he orders the barren trees to recruit their vigour and bloom forth again; cannot the same God of creation order our fallen frame to rise again, and become re-
animated?

animated?—Had not he power, when his *human* nature slept in the arms of death, to exercise his *divine* nature, and order a glorious resurrection to himself?—Did not he, in the sight of the people, say to him who had been putrifying in his grave, and with a loud voice, “ Lazarus, come forth!—and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave cloaths?”—If then these be admitted as indisputable facts, why cannot the same Almighty Fiat hereafter say to your decayed dust, Come forth?

St. Paul, in his very close and eloquent reasoning to the Corinthians on the resurrection of the dead, offers very many insuperable arguments for it; nay, he goes so far as to say, that if there be *no* resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. The apostle had already laid a good foundation, proving by infallible and plentiful testimony the resurrection of Christ, from those who had personally seen him rise from the dead. He particularly levelled his remarks to some in that church who disputed the resurrection; either the Sadduces, or some
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of the Pharisees, who denied the resurrection of Christians; or to some of those who were supposed to be tinged with the doctrines of Pagan philosophy;—however, the reasoning of this inspired preacher, in the 15th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, well deserves your particular attention and admiration. And Christ here declares himself to Martha, saying, “*I am the resurrection and the life.*”

Martha believed that there would be a general resurrection from the dead at the last day, by the mighty power of God; but she did not appear sensible what influence *Christ* had upon this resurrection; how the raising of the dead should be the *peculiar* work of him; she is, therefore, *further instructed*;—and our Lord emphatically declares, that *he* is the resurrection and the life.—*I am the resurrection*—means no more than I am, and shall be, the *principal* cause of the resurrection; for the effect is here, as in many other parts of scripture, put for the cause—“The dead *shall hear* the voice of the Son of God,”—Our Lord says, that he is the *life* also;

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that is, the cause of *life*; both what the dead shall have in resurrection, and also that eternal *life* which shall follow after;—and whosoever relies upon me, and committeth himself soul and body—"he that believeth in me, and my word, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

How glorious, how cordial is this promise!—seek *faith in Christ*, believe in him, and, though dead, yet *you* shall live!—What!—after sleeping a few moments in our native bed the dust, to rise again, and die no more, but live for ever!—how does it transport the soul with joy!—the pulse beats high with expectation, and seems to anticipate the lovely time, when this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved—when this aching, distracted, tormented frame, forgetting sorrow, shall slumber in the grave, and the happy spirit live in ceaseless happiness with her Redeemer and her life.—"To live, is Christ—to die, is gain." What though this outward frame perish, yet her nobler inhabitant shall rejoice.—Sooner, or later, all must go, I mean to the grave. Had we seen none die, the pride of
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our nature might seem to dispute the point ; but it is the irreverfible decree, however degrading to her, “Duff thou art, and unto duft thou muft return.” We are only lodgers in this world ; fome a few hours, fome a few nights, fome a few months, and fome a few years ; but make an eftimate of thofe two or three who live to an advanced age, and the millions who die before, the average and allotment of lives, reduce our time here to a fmall portion indeed ; it is like a tale that is told, fo foon paffeth it away, and we are gone.

Confider alfo, that the glafs may be more than half run out ; and fuppofe that *we are fure* (which, God knows, none are) of living *the other few years*, deduct from thofe the time employed in reft, and other refreshments of body, befides the interruption of difeafe, and other calamities, how few are the moments left to dedicate to the folemn enquiries of a *ceafelefs eternity* ?—Would to God that thefe things were ferioufly laid to heart !

We must die, and that *very soon*; and a resurrection either to the just, or unjust. The awful difference spare me the pain of now alarming you with. May God direct us in chusing *this moment*, and in good earnest, that which will comfort us here, and glorify us hereafter; and never mind the bitter tears of parting, you only part to meet again—to have a glorious welcome above. Think not that when these feeble eyes are closed, and the tongue no longer speaks, that all is over;—no—if you believe in Christ, though dead, you will live—you will live triumphing o'er the grave and death; and your soul, incapable then of sorrow, will for ever chaunt forth the goodness of your God.

Let us then often meditate on these happy truths:—to familiarize ourselves with the contemplations of death makes its arrival less *unwelcome*:—*not* to think of *it all*, makes that monarch's visit extremely bitter, and sadly awful!

God knows that daily examples are not wanting to tell us we are mortal, and soon
ourselves

ourselves must *die* !—May we then covet so to live, that we may die the death of the righteous, and that our last end may be like his.—And such we doubt not is the glorious privilege of our departed sister, whose memory we now solemnize, and are here assembled to pay our last tribute to departed worth !

Her life and endearing manners were the best proofs of the goodness of her mind.—The cause of God appears to have been the subject of her zealous attention ; and thus she is now enjoying her glorious reward.—Her benevolent works of charity to her distressed fellow-creatures have followed her, and now are returned tenfold into her own bosom.—May God raise up more such generous benefactors to the poor !

Her affectionate virtues in the relative offices of wife and mother, I dare not touch upon !—A representation of them will ill suit the mournful feelings of some who are now present. The *realities* are yet too fresh in *their memories* ; and in the attempt of

drawing her amiable character throughout, your troubled minds would but survey the tomb with more acute regret; and thus, instead of *healing*, I should *provoke* that gathering tear to start; but *for once* take Christian resolution, and check its natural zest.—She is not dead, but sleepeth!—no longer sensible, it is true, of the clamour or the pains of this transitory *life*; but enjoying eternal serenity and joy in heaven. Take comfort then—she is only gone before, and we are following with *winged speed*. May we, then, so deport ourselves, as not be denied a happy meeting. May we believe in God, and his gracious dispensations, and though dead, we shall live!—no more to *part*, but live together in a glorious eternity!—And thus shall we be enabled to address the great terrible of all terribles, and say to him as did the great apostle, “O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?”

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT
FITZROY CHAPEL,

On the 5th of NOVEMBER.



S E R M O N X.

ROMANS, chap. viii. ver. 31.

If God be for us, who can be against us ?

THE apostle, in the previous verses, has been ably setting forth the terms and manner in which we are made free from *condemnation*, and *justified* before God. This inspired theologist forcibly asserts the pre-knowledge of God in our various appointments to glory ; and, indeed, it were extremely impious if *we* attempted to deny it ; for as the holy writer says, “ Whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he *called*, them he also *justified* ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And what, says he, shall we say then to these things ?—If God be for us, who can be against us ?

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One might here very properly dwell on the import of the previous text, and unload it a little from the false imputations and conclusions which weak heads, and bad hearts, are restless to deduce from it; but God is true, and every man a liar. We all must allow his omniscience, and that his ways are in the deep. We cannot impair the attributes of God, and deny what he demands. We must not give way to despair on the one hand, nor presumption on the other. Christianity is a regular chain, and one link misplaced deranges the whole;—so *one* verse of scripture, either misrepresented or misunderstood, unharmonizes its whole order, symmetry, and beauty. Let us rest assured of this *unerring* truth, that whoever seeks *earnestly* God's mercy, will never miss it. Thus speaks the whole genius of revelation. It is the declaration of God himself, and it is the consolation of his creatures:—without it, it were misery altogether.

If God be for us, who then can be against us?—What on earth can?—Nothing.—Our most spiteful foes lose their spleen—
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our most formidable enemies *lose their power*. —Who, says the apostle, shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, or the sword?—no! all are vain and contemptible.

It is true, we may feel the pangs of sorrow in its thousand forms; sin itself, by ruffian force, may eclipse for a moment the splendor of even God's elect, and, as it were, by a sudden blow, convulse the springs of religion, and of virtue too; yet true faith returns weeping to her God, the center of all her attractions. Though tears may trickle down the saddened face, and for a moment darken every hope, yet presently the immortal spark within *rekindles*, beautifies, and consoles the dejected mind! —The Christian is an hero!—a *dauntless warrior*!—A thousand petty states attack him *from within and without*; but though they may harass him *a little*, yet to conquer him it is impossible. Here the soldier who is enlisted under Christ's heavenly banner *nobly hectors*!—“If God, says he, be for us,

us, who can be against us?" He speaks to his enemy as David did to Goliath—"What though thou comest against me with a sword and spear, yet I come against thee in the name of the Lord!"

He that made the world, and wields it with his finger, is the Christian's protector. If such submit themselves and their cause into his hands, nothing can hurt them—no weapon formed against them *can prosper*. If the dagger of death be in a moment pointed to their breast, it is he only, it is his providence which stops its base design, and says, "hitherto shalt thou go, and no further."

The God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, *there is no God like unto him*.—He that preserved Daniel from the ferocity of lions, has also preserved us. The revolution of this day informs us *feelingly*, that God was on our side. God truly was for us, and our barbarous enemies could not effect their wicked designs. What but an Almighty power preserved a whole kingdom from becoming, in one moment, miserable

ferable victims to the cruelty of godless ambition?—an iniquity which no age has equalled, and which every future one must read with horror. Infamous must that cause be indeed, which calls fire and faggot to its support; which is nourished by slaughter, and fed by blood!—but we will not distress our recollection with the shocking massacres in Ireland, or pierce your very souls with the unheard-of cruelties in *Smithfield*. Those *dying martyrs*, while *humanity* commands a tear for *outward* torture, Christianity wipes it away—they now are happy!—Nothing but God could have so nobly supported them to the *inglorious* stake!—every shriek they gave will rise up in fierce judgment against their hateful murderers.

That men *could*, as did these miscreants, determine on such complicated cruelty, seems almost *incredible*;—but true is that divine declaration, “He that diggeth a pit shall fall therein;”—the *very plot* that was so basely planned for the ruin both of church and state, not only served to expose their obloquy, but *weakened* their own cause; for
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it is remarkable, that persecution at all times is a very bad remedy against errors, and particularly for those which are called religious.

There is usually a prevailing and popular sympathy given to all those who are oppressed, and in misery; merely on account of opinion, which gradually cements affection, and sometimes a likeness of *sentiment*. He who injures another because he differs from him, gives the world just grounds of suspicion, that severity and cruelty are the only advocates to support his cause, and the only weapons to fight his unprincipled battle.

The tares and the wheat, our Lord says, must grow together till harvest; let no man, therefore, dare by any violence, and thro' an intoxicated zeal, to pluck up even the tares, lest, as a fallible being himself, he chance to root up the wheat also. Besides, the gospel of our Saviour every where teaches its followers to *endure*, but not to inflict persecutions. The blessed Author of it, on being urged to revenge himself upon a company

pany of rude schismatics, solemnly declares, that "he came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Christianity requires not the aid of worldly policy, or power, to *recommend* it; no! it has vanquished the ignorance and prejudice of mankind, by its own native excellence, and attractive purity. Had it been proclaimed by the mouth of the cannon, or terribly pointed out to us by the glittering blades of death, thirsty to reek themselves in human blood, the Alcoran itself might have claimed a superiority; but Christianity atchieved its conquest by methods quite the reverse of these; it fought a glorious battle against a world of foes, and gained a blessed victory without scrip or sword:—for, as God was for it, who could be *against* it?

And can we commemorate this day without the most *grateful recollection*?—God was indeed powerfully on our side, and the wicked plots of those against us were baulked.—May so gracious an interposition of divine mercy direct us, in good earnest, to seek so powerful a friend on *every* occasion; for
human

human efforts, however wisely planned, will ever fail in their desired effect, unless we look up to God, the great author, and implore *his blessing*. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God alone that giveth the increase—Unless the *Lord* guard the city, the watchman waketh but in vain—The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord."—And though the poisonous venom of papal power and principle cannot at present shew its teeth, yet what shall hinder that *combustible*, that alarming matter from re-suppurating, and once more bursting forth?—For the principles of the Romish Church are the same—her documents the same—and human nature is the same!—but thanks be to God that opportunity is not the same!—for where *pride* is to be interested, or ambition gratified, the secret language with too many is, like the husbandmen in the gospel, "Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours;"—let us wade through all,—set every feeling that ought to dignify our nature at defiance, and with daring effrontery laugh at and insult the noblest sentiments of humanity,

humanity, of virtue, and of justice!—Such ambition is so paltry, that what can you mention too mean for its attention, if for its *gratification*? it will cringe to the dung-hill, or it will dragoon the palace; it will sacrifice a friend, a family, a kingdom, if she can but hector with ignominious triumph. To taste the poisoned hateful honey, ambition will suck it from the most painful thorn—from her fawning smiles—adulation, and homage as your vassal, your servant, your slave, your friend, your martyr, your any thing—Nurse but her wishes, cherish but her hopes, and like the viper she will corrosively sting the very bosom which gave her heat. If the brilliancy of Virtue in her most delightful attire—if the bleeding tears of grief and humanity melting through every pore, and piercing every sense—if religion, gemmed round with all the dazzling enchanting stars of the purest heaven, should stand gazing one moment with silent horror at the unrelenting havock of pride and ambition, even on these they would glut their inglorious revenge!—In fact, where these have been,

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what have they not done?—They have stained with innocent blood the sacred pages, and have stamped indelible turpitude and cruelty on the leaves of human history.—Let us, then, fervently implore God's mercy, for ever to bind in chains of adamant these *furious* beasts; for what but pride and ambition, hand in hand, occasioned the horrid intentions which, by the mercy of God, we on this day celebrate our deliverance from?—And only contrast the beauties of humility with the deformities of pride—how persuasive and heavenly is the one—how hateful and domineering the other!—At present, however, we are basking in the sunshine of civil and religious liberties; but let us not, midst these envied blessings, forget the hand that gave them, and the blood that purchased them.

Nature is every where best known by contrast, as light and darkness, summer and winter.—Had our forefathers, who for their holy and pious conversation were sorely persecuted—who so painfully felt the thorns of papal power piercing their sides—had
they

they felt the smiles and favours of Heaven in so eminent a degree as we have done, how thankful would they have been!—how grateful in adorations to their God!—but he who is the disposer of all events knows best how to act, and what visitations are best fitted to our various tempers. Seek only God while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Put your concerns in the hands of a faithful God; let Jesus Christ be your only confident and friend. *Build on him*—build your church and glory on that divine rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Let the sad designs of this day, and the great interposition of Heaven, prove that God neither sleeps *nor slumbers*; and let it awaken and spur our gratitude to have him still on *our* side, and then none can be against us. But remember, that while we commemorate blessings like these, let us copy the temper of our divine Master; and when reviewing the tragic plot, and even its wicked authors, let us not betray a fierce or unchristian temper—but implore, as did our Saviour, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Convert our bre-

thren of the Romish church from their darling errors. May they have God on *their side*; and seeing what he marvellously has done for us, may it encourage them to fly humbly to his blood;—so that they with us, and we with them, may hereafter sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven to all eternity.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED IN THE
PARISH CHURCH OF ST. BRIDE,
On SUNDAY, the 18th MAY, 1788,
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
GENERAL LYING-IN CHARITY
FOR THE
Delivery and Support of POOR MARRIED WOMEN, at
their own Habitations.

The SUBSTANCE of which was likewise preached at
ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK,
On SUNDAY, 21st January, 1787,
Before the Right Honourable the LORD MAYOR, ALDER-
MEN, and SHERIFFS, for the Benefit of the Society
Children of that Parish.

S. F. R. M. O. N.

BRITISH CHURCH OF ST. BRIDE

OF ST. BRIDE, THE 188 M. 1882

CHURCH OF ST. BRIDE



(clxxxiii)

T O
ANDREW THYNNE, M. D.
MEMBER OF THE
ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
LONDON,
AND
REGULATING PHYSICIAN
OF THE
GENERAL LYING-IN CHARITY.

S I R,

AS the first Design of the following Sermon was to assist your excellent Charity, with a View of effecting still further so good a Purpose, I must here beg you to accept, what you did me the Honour to receive from the Pulpit.

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The

(clxxxiv)

The Patronage which distinguishes your Institution, is at once numerous and respectable, because Humanity and Attention are its deserving Features; and under your skilful Management, and fostering Care, such will continue to be the great Recommendations.

Allow me this Opportunity of expressing my best Thanks for the many Favours your Politeness and Friendship have conferred on,

S I R,

Your much obliged,

and very humble Servant,

London,
19th April, 1789. }

EDW. BARRY.

S E R-

S E R M O N XI.

ST. MARK, chap. x. ver. 23.

*How hardly shall they that have riches enter into
the kingdom of God?*

SURELY there is something in the sound of this text which alarms the man of fortune, and damps a little the glee of fashion; it even arrests with a few grave moments, the eager buzz of thriving merchandise.

The inoffensive man, of vast estates, sitting in his envied chair, lulling away his life in retired indolence, appears for once to startle. Another, who all his life long has toiled for bread, and earned his little, as he terms it, by the sweat of his brow, sorely feels the tightness of the text. He loosens
it

it however from himself, as well as he can, and is very generous to make it fit his neighbour. In fact, all are adroit to parry off the outward thrust, but secretly feel the inward stab; and what Nathan said unto David, they reluctantly apply to themselves.

But notwithstanding the apparent severity of our Saviour's observation, in the words just read, yet on a cool and mature examination it will appear that they were uttered with the greatest compassion, as a timely caution to wealth and opulence.

The chapter tells us of one, who by another evangelist is called a certain ruler, who applied to our Saviour to know what he might do to inherit eternal life;—and surely it was a very *becoming enquiry*!—Our Lord held forth to his view the commandments—The ruler said, “*all these have I observed from my youth.*” Would to God we could say likewise!—But our Lord, who well knows the human heart, penetrated into the infirmities even of this virtuous character. One would have thought, that as
he

he had kept *all* the commandments, he had been a fair candidate for heaven; but, alas! we know not ourselves.

Our Saviour listened to this ruler's concern for salvation, and good account of himself, with so much pleasure that *he loved* him; and no doubt was pained to tell him, that in the midst of these very amiable qualifications; he yet lacked one thing necessary to obtain what he asked for;—and thus our Lord puts it to the test—“Go thy way, he said, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven—and come and take up the cross, and follow *me*.” This affected the ruler so much, that he was even sad at the saying, and went away grieved, for he had *great possessions*. Jesus then looked round about, and saith to his disciples, “how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?”

Thus you have seen a manifest difficulty in the brief narrative of the ruler. You learn how well he was fitted for happiness, had

had it not *been for riches*. This was the dead fly in the ointment—this the noxious bitter herb which *unperfumed* his other odours!—What a pity, that after having attained to such eminence in every other virtue, and had nearly landed on happiness, that he sinks as it were in the *fight* of shore. He could take up the decalogue, and as far as it was in the power of human nature, he could plead innocence to them—nay, even from his youth; but though he could obey all other precepts, yet to sell his possessions, to part with his gold, to give to the poor, his soul was not equal to;—he could not vanquish that tyrant *wealth*. Hence, says our Lord in another place, “It is easier for a camel, (or what might have been rendered a cable)—it is easier for a cable to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;”—and our text likewise, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?”

But notwithstanding these alarming observations, they are far from supposing the
impossibility

impossibility of a rich man going to heaven; but only to shew by such expressive language, or metaphor, the difficulties and temptations he has to encounter with ;—such as pride to *conquer*, pleasures to *overcome*, and luxuries to *oppose*, which all are the natural offspring of riches, unless the grace of God check their career. Besides all this, he is no more than a steward over them;—he is commanded to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit and relieve the sick, and be ready on every occasion to exert this talent to the glory of God, and the service of his fellow-creatures; so that to use and not abuse these riches demands more than *human* wisdom. How seldom is it the wealthy say, Lord, this is gold I am only the *steward* of, make me faithful to the important trust; banish from my soul the hellish attacks of covetousness, and preserve me from the fallies of prodigality?

A rich man may be an honoured instrument in promoting the glory of God, and the service of his fellow-creature. The patriarch Abraham was rich in cattle, in silver, and

and in gold—he saw the day of *prosperity*;—but he saw *another* day—he *saw it*, rejoiced, and was glad.

In the ocean of high life how apt men are to sink?—It behoves them then to cry out, “Save, Lord, or I perish.”

Worldly prosperity is a trust that demands the utmost skill and fidelity to be safely managed;—it is a trust of such real important consequence, that, if seriously weighed, few would accept it if they could;—it would involve them into such duties, that they would, if they thought rightly, suspect their inability to discharge them;—and it is too sadly to be remarked, that at the same time as riches afford the means, yet like a niggard, and a cheat, she refuses, by many artifices, the temper of honesty to the trust. Prosperity is a charge, and the only pleasure a good mind can feel in it, is the opportunity and determination of being faithful to it.

Poverty

Poverty tries our patience, and with the exertion of our best endeavours, we are to rely on God's pleasure. The apostle says, "I am instructed both to be full and empty—both to *abound* and to suffer want." It is a very critical hazardous matter to deport ourselves well in the vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity; and therefore the wise man prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches—feed me with food convenient for me."

If then riches at best are but a trust, and ourselves only stewards, let us arm ourselves with resolution and principle; but above all, implore God's grace so to exercise them, that instead of being a stumbling-block to our salvation, or the authors of our condemnation before God, they may, by a cheerful good exercise of them, be the happy instruments of spreading comfort here, and increasing our glory hereafter.—But have they such dominion over you—are you so enslaved to their *delusions*—are you so enamoured with their fetters, that neither the fear of punishment, nor the hope of a blessed reward,

reward, will incline you to suspect your danger, or invite you to generous actions?—To such my text awfully speaks—“How hardly shall you enter into the kingdom of God?”—But the appearance of this congregation persuades me, that I am not addressing such.

It is not long since I stood up in this place in the cause of a different charity, and your liberality on that occasion, makes to remember whom I am again speaking to. Suffer me, then, to introduce to your kind offices, an institution which cannot but deserve well of you. I am again here this morning an humble advocate for genuine—for the *most natural*—for a *political*—and I may say—for a most godlike charity!—Other charities may have good claims to your *bounty*; but none so forcibly speaks to the heart, as that which offers relief to nature in her *most pitiable*, truly distressing situation.

Spare me the pain!—indeed I should fail in the attempt, if endeavouring to draw the picture

picture of that poor woman, whose peculiar *situation* and *poverty* have brooded for a long time past the most *dreadful fears*—enough; God knows, to bear the burthen of her *travail*! and too much comfort even at this time cannot be given to her languid *spirits*; and what would you say to hear that the pangs of nature had suddenly *seized her*—unprovided with aid—surrounded with poverty!—could you be a quiet spectator to a scene like this?—could you hear the expiring shrieks of keen *anguish* and *despair*, and not have your heart instantly pierced with mercy?—could you see the distracted eyes of penury and of torture gazing with horror on all around, till at length, finding none to succour her—none to help her—no handmaid—no cordial to nature!—the galling tear is gathering in the eye—she turns her pale face to the beggar'd walls; and on the thorny pillow, rolling with bitter pain on the hard beaten couch, she lifts up her trembling prayer to Heaven, that God would put a period to this sad misery!—Surely this is sorrow!—this is Charity speaking eloquently her own cause!—And

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if you have never seen or heard of such a tale, be assured of the many which daily happen. Could you see them with your eyes, or hear them with your *ears*, you would there be taught to *feel another's woe*. But though we are not the *spectators*; though these calamities are not perhaps in the streets, but are hid from our eyes in some forgotten miserable abode; yet be assured there are such—and *such*, though absent, call upon you by my voice to become the friend of nature—to aid the work of God—to welcome in *posterity*.

More might be said—but your humanity, I am sure—your feelings as Christians, and as men, must be before-hand. Your own native goodness, I am confident, has persuaded you what to do.—And some, no doubt, are here, who must have anticipated far beyond what I could say on a subject of this kind. To *them* little indeed requires to be said—even in prosperity they have felt the dismal hour!—May that experience give a striking idea what it must be in the most wretched adversity.

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I could here enlarge on the policy of such an institution, but that is of itself too evident and glaring to want a single comment from me for *its* support.—Many, I grant you, are already the excellent asylums for this immediate purpose. They do honour to human nature, and reflect peculiar worth on this metropolis: But though we admit that several are these sanctuaries in distress, let it at the same time be noticed, that there is still a greater portion of distressed objects. There never can reasonably be too great a number of charitable institutions, unless we can excel too much in humanity, and be too lavish with virtue.

But do you say, that these many places of relief interrupt the benevolent designs of each other?—it is then at most but a rivalry in goodness, and it will, in all probability, be productive of this desirable effect, That the peculiar officers of each will endeavour to excel each other in attention and humanity to their patients:—for while many doors are open, it will naturally stir up a laudable jealousy for superiority—and where

inclination might be wanting, policy will command it ;—and thus, watched by the public eye, that institution only will deserve the best aid and patronage which exercises the best usage, attendance, and compassion : and hence the painful tales of neglect and austere treatment, too often shewn to the indigent sick, will be greatly obviated, if not wholly prevented.—But the charity which at this time solicits your good offices, is most assuredly distinguished, as well by the most respectable advice, as the utmost decency, tenderness, and attention.

We are all one family in this great world, and God is the father of us all. In a little time no distinction will remain between rich and poor. All here is transitory !—all beyond, eternal !——The revolution of life is so certain and astonishing, that who knows aught to the contrary, but that the very objects who may partake of your philanthropy, will one day be exercising the same goodness and humanity to some distant friend or relation of the present donors ?—for all things are in the hands of God ; he bringeth

bringeth mighty things to pass; he setteth up one, and pulleth down another!—Stand forth then, let me once more intreat you, and drop the welcome tribute!—You cannot, and I am sure, you will not refuse to do it.

To importune you any longer is unnecessary. To point out your riches and power, I cannot;—indeed, it might be thought indelicate in me if I could;—but reflect, that in heaven your *ability* is registered, and there your faithful and unfaithful exercise of it will be strictly watched.---- And whilst I congratulate the zeal of the *accepted widow's mite*, I must beg to apply to another the awful import of my text, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?” and beg to ask the rich man, when he has thrown into the treasury, if he can appeal to Heaven that he has done his best? and whether he would be afraid to meet his God in judgment, and by the purity of that act alone to receive his eternal sentence of happiness or misery?—This is a short, but a very une-

quivocal way of probing the heart, and discovering in a great degree the truth.

The time allotted us to do good, God knows! is at most but little; let us then employ that *little well*; not grudgingly, but *cheerfully*; and not as unto man, but as unto the Lord. We are tenants in this world only during the pleasure of him that made it. Every moment speeds us to our end; when all the pride, the beauty, the riches, the titles, the luxuries of life, must *all* wither into the paleness of death, and shroud themselves with the horror of the grave; when all distinctions shall cease, and the kindred dust of rich and poor *imperceptibly* will unite together!—We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out; and of all the goods that are left behind, we shall have nothing to live upon to *all eternity*, but only the good we did with them. The necessities that we relieved, the oppressions that we eased, the nakedness we cloathed, and the hunger we satisfied, these *indeed* will follow after us, and feed us with content and happiness to
eternal

eternal ages—But if destitute of these, soon shall we be landed in another world!—upon a strange and inhospitable shore, and there be left miserable and despairing beggars indeed!—then we shall wish, but wish *ten thousand* times in vain, that instead of gratifying of fashion and of luxury, or feeding *insatiable* avarice with the continual increase of wealth, that we had, by works of piety and charity, made ourselves friends to the mammon of unrighteousness; so that when they failed, they might receive us into everlasting habitations, and entertain us with pleasure and delight to all eternity!

Seize then every opportunity of doing good—and thank God that you are the *givers*, and *not* the receivers!—The poor, perhaps, cannot recompense you here—but God will, at the resurrection of the just: and when the liberal heart is laid low on the couch of pain and disease—when the great wheel of life turns *gently round*—when weeping friends are melting forth their sorrowful adieus, and at length the *cold* griping hand of Death has nearly stopped the pulse, *even here*, in this

awful and affecting view, the soul will recollect her best exertions in the cause of the *poor*, of virtue and religion!—Then will you remember this and every other act of charity. *God* will return into your own bosom a *cordial balm*. You will recline on the pillow of dissipation, *comforted* by the sure promises of your dear Redeemer, and death will lose its sting and terror. The prayers of the fatherless *poor* and widow, though they cannot stop the *painful tear for departing charity*, yet they will rend the very air with hallelujahs to *God their guardian*; while happy angels join the glorious notes, and conduct, through etherial skies, the blessed spirit to its great reward in heaven.

Now to God, &c.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

ST. JOHN'S, HACKNEY,

1788.



S E R M O N XII.

ST. LUKE, chap. xv. part of the 17 and 18 ver.

*And when he came to himself, he said, Father, I
have sinned against Heaven, and before thee.*

THUS said the contrite prodigal ; and as the circumstances which produced so noble a confession are a faithful mirror of ourselves, so profitable for our own meditation, and so clearly represented in the gospel, it would be much injustice not to give a few outlines of this grand portrait at large. It is a connected parable, and hangs together with most admirable links. It cannot be detached, else we might spoil its light and shadow. —The splendid dignity of the sun must shew itself, breaking forth, illuminating, consol-
ing,

ing, and dispelling the most gloomy, the most melancholy of clouds. Indeed, the whole forms a saddening, pleasing group of characters, and strikes the eye and heart with its beautiful and astonishing effect. It is the exhibition of nature; it is a picture drawn from life, original, and well finished by the masterly pencil of inspiration; and the design of it is to shew our own true colours.—The excellent allegory is so framed, to teach us, that what the son was to his *parent*, so *we* are to God; and that with his contrition, we shall have his pardon and reward; but till then we must remain as he did, in abjectness, contempt, and ruin.

Since, then, the lesson is so interesting, let us lose no time to enquire about it.—But how shall I unfold it to you? Will you then turn your eyes upon the youth, a little while ago nursed in the tender lap of fond affection, strangely forgetting the fond bosom that cherished him, and weaning himself from filial love and duty? He is gradually ripened into self-confidence, stubbornness, and pride. He feels a consequence

sequence in himself, and suddenly claims from his father the portion of goods which fell to him. However unwelcome, however unnatural this request, the parent does not mention, but divided his living. Picture to yourselves the tragical scene. See the darling giddy youth forsaking his aged father, quitting his dearest friend, to mingle, alas! as he thought, with the most jovial of creation—to taste, as he thought, every sweet of fashion and company—to pluck, as he thought, from every lane of life, *a fragrant, never-fading rose*. Drunk with eager hopes, he bids adieu to a happy home, and a broken-hearted parent, who, as he could not prevent, did not remonstrate on this unfeeling, this hazardous enterprize. He spoke, though no doubt in dumb eloquence, and took from his beloved son a longing, lingering, farewell!—And hence the youth rushes into the *pleasures*, but *I should have said*, the bitterest sorrows of life.

He first takes a journey, we are told, into a far country, and there wastes his substance in riotous living. Could you behold
him

him now in the loose circles of intemperance and extravagance, and presently contrast those with the consequent meanness, hunger and wretchedness, it might exhibit a striking lesson to guard against the former, that we might escape the pangs of the latter. Poor creature!—his distress is so keen and complicated, that he now very gladly accepted the very degrading menial office of feeding swine; and from the excess of luxury, would fain partake with those animals to satisfy his craving wants. At this melancholy despairing crisis, what must have been his meditations?—Far distant from *home*—abandoned by those miscreants among whom he had exhausted his substance—deserted by those hypocrites who affected sanguine friendship while they feasted on his ruin, he is now reduced to the lowest ebb of distress. While painful, bitter reflections severely lash his folly, how wishfully, methinks, his dejected eyes are rolling about!—O could he but have a glimpse of that kind mansion he deserted—of that dear friend he forsook, his heart would pant with more than extatic joy!—But the parent cannot witness the
affecting

affecting scene; nor can the piercing cries of a despairing, perishing son reach the father's ears!—He is left to linger in silent woe!—A thousand ideas, it may be supposed, were roving in his mind, and each had its pointed arrow.

This pitiable youth is now truly in the severest school of discipline. One moment here must give more torture, than it is possible the most gigantic expectations before could have given him pleasure. What must be done for his relief? How is he to be delivered from this most gloomy situation, and rescued from the jaws of impending death? To return home in these rags, and in this incredulous misery, and expect to be restored to my father's favour and love, after that I have vilely squandered away my portion, and dissipated my mind by the most infamous manners, and brought almost an indelible obloquy on myself and family, it would be too great an act of grace and mercy to expect!—But yet *I must* return to the paternal arms. I am resolved at all events to try;—and how am I to make the effort?

Thus

Thus reasoning, *he came to himself*; and then the language of *the heart*, and not *the head*, instructed him.—“ My father keeps many hired servants, and, lo, I perish with hunger!—I am *come now to myself*—to feel myself.” To *know ourselves* is the grand lesson of life, that pulls down the Babel of pride, and gives us the first, the prime principle of Christianity, and that is *humility*:—without it, all pretensions to religion are false and hypocritical.

It was then at that season when he *came to himself*—when he *knew himself*—that he determined what to do. “ I will arise,” says the poor prodigal, “ and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants.” When he possessed genuine humility, he was not ashamed of any honest employment, or ashamed to join in servitude with even those who once had obeyed his commands. This is the great blessing of knowing ourselves.

Affliction

Affliction is sometimes very useful physic ; it sobers *the mind* ; it makes us think of ourselves as we ought to think ; it gives us humility, which is the best attitude of the soul, and brings us near to God. This brought a heart-felt confession for sin in the prodigal. It was not the cold insipid articulation of his tongue, but the genuine warm sentiments of his contrite soul.

With all these happy features of sorrow in the dejected son, the father saw at a distance ; no severity is seen in the parent's countenance—no harsh language is heard—no cutting remonstrances seen whetting in his brow—No!—when the humble penitent is languishing yet at a distance, the gladdened heart of his fond father cannot wait in sorrowful suspense!—he anticipates and sees his outward misery—he hears, as it were, already the tremulous tongue speaking, in most pathetic eloquence, to a parent's feeling!—The parent can no longer listen—he is charmed into tears, and embraces almost with frantic love the disconsolate form of his long-absent son!—Here is a meeting!

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ing!—here is a picture, which no pencil can paint—that no language can utter!

Thus, then, it is, and must be, with God and ourselves. We have all by nature and practice deserted God our Father, and have by arrogance and pride dismissed ourselves from our heavenly paradise. We have gone into a far, very far country, into the world of sin and Satan. Instead of heavenly manna, we have fed upon the filthy husks of human entertainment; and the mind, sooner or later, must feel the poverty, the misery of such poor, such vile trash; but while the lamp of life seems to burn furiously, as when the prodigal was in excess, such reflections may *not operate*; but presently when the mind is a little calmed by meditation, or brought to recollection by any calamity, we then nauseate the soul feeding of this world; we at length detect its hidden poison; desiring now rather to be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness. All things below appear contemptible—all above, delightful and desirable. Then the mind enquires how she may return
to

to God, her father and her friend;—how to be re-admitted a welcome guest! When that truly is the case, despair not a happy reception. I need not dictate what your language should be on so happy an occasion. If by pride, and its concomitant vices, you have offended God—now endeavour to atone for it, and please him by the very acceptable language of sorrow and humility. He has long mourned your departure; for he wept bitterly over disobedient Israel;—he weeps over you, and declares, that “he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner.”—But, alas! with grief and confusion may it be observed, that in spite of all these noble encouragements, there is something so wretchedly conceited and ungrateful in human nature, as impudently to presume on the favour of Heaven!—Because Christianity appears in the loveliest attire, and charmingly persuades, sinners vainly suppose, that by courting their attention she is too much enamoured to forsake them; and thus they tantalize and triumph in her love;—but they forget that she can set aside her love, to take vengeance on their perfidy,

and sweetly to revenge the insults offered to her glorious jealousy!

If proving so resolute in guilt, that nothing but scourges can make us feel—and so stupid, that nothing but judgment can awake the mind, God will send his terrors to make us know him, and his judgments to make us know ourselves—the psalmist says, “Put them in fear, O Lord, that the Heathen may know themselves to be but men;”——for till then, it is too often that we never have a thought about God—ourselves—or eternity.

If the word Christianity perchance should intrude itself on our notice, it is got rid of as quick as possible. The prodigal, the son of fashion, the trembling debauchee, the accomplished and the vulgar sinner, are all unanimous to withstand this common foe to their happiness and dissipation. They will nearly all of them agree, that the laws of religion are only calculated for the phlegmatic and the dull:—that nature has permitted them freely to use what she

she has so luxuriously provided for their
 entertainment. The heaven, indeed, they
 are so good to *allow to be the Lord's*; that
 he dwelleth therein, and doth what pleaseth
 him best; but the earth is their's, and who
 shall dare to interrupt them?—There is but
 a small portion of time allotted them—"Let
 us not then be buried, say they, while alive,
 in religious melancholy. To order all our
 actions according to stinted rules and precepts,
 belongs only to slaves, and those of a servile
 turn of mind. *Our* enlightened, expand-
 ed souls *spurn* such injunctions. We have
 the wide world to ramble in—*Fortune* has
 thrown us in the envied track of pleasure—
 we have health, and wealth, to taste every
 sweet of life; and they are bigots, or fools,
 who wish to turn this happy tide we so
sweetly glide in. They grudge us what they
 cannot possess themselves. We know, or ra-
 ther, we *dread* the thoughts of death; but
 it is a debt which all must pay; and surely
 the Deity can never be so morose, and un-
 just, to punish his creatures for gratifying,
 to the *full*, those passions which *he implanted*
in our nature!—At all events, God is mer-
 ciful

ciful—so let us eat and drink to-day, though *to-morrow* we die.”—This is the mask which sinners wear, to entice others ; this the bait, this the hypocrisy of sin !—This is the sweetened cup of poison, from which, alas ! many have drunk their bitter fatal draughts !—To such hearty sentiments as these, the prodigal, no doubt at one time, would have given his warmest approbation ; but all this is want of reflection—it is for want of humility.

“ Know thyself,” was the great admonition of the learned sages, and worthy to be immortalized by them in letters of gold !—For want of this great knowledge, innumerable evils are suffered to surround us. We shrink from the enquiry. Pride will not suffer the thought ;—she caught the first man, and persuaded him he should be a god :—and from that moment poor foolish man has toiled to support his title !

Nothing, perhaps, more effectually hinders the knowledge of ourselves, than flattery. While a croud of parasites are buzzing

zing scarce any thing around us but the applauses of a deluding multitude—while such are sucking into their vitals the hosannahs of perfidious mortals, it is impossible almost, with this training, to hear the voice of reason, or to know themselves;—but yet two arrows there are, which cannot fail to teach them, *Calamity* and *Death*. Calamity, like an unwelcome guest, forces itself upon us, and makes a rude seizure of our joys; but last of all, *Death*.—When this sad spectacle stalks into the chamber, and holds his glass to reflect our torpid ghastly visage, then shall we see of what we are, and unto what we must return.

Upon the whole, therefore, if we desire to be *happy*, so must we study to be *wise*; I mean the knowledge of *God*, and of *ourselves*. All wisdom else, compared to this is but shewy and *speculative*—“for after all those things do the *Gentiles* seek,” who know, perhaps, as little of themselves as of the God who *made* them. But let it be our duty, to look out for some nobler wisdom—to study for some better end—to take pains after all other knowledge—to dive into the bowels of the earth for it—to
ransack

ransack kingdoms for pebbles, for leaves, and for coins—to burthen the memory with the voluminous pages of history—to tire the mind, by plowing on *foreign languages*, or *distract* the brain with abstruse *science*, and desert the great *knowledge* of ourselves—of *what we are*, and where we are travelling to—what *fool-hardiness*!—what bold presumption!

Let us, then, implore God to impress on our minds that we are but men, and are decaying into death every moment *we live*; that with such reflections we may *know* ourselves; and as the *prodigal*, when he came to that knowledge, returned to his father, so may we return to God, before the dreadful day of the Lord shall suddenly overtake us; when we shall be *made* to know ourselves;—but, alas! with eternal shame, and feel it with endless sorrow!—In the midst, therefore, of all situations in life, whether *honourable*, or *dishonourable*—*poor*, or *rich*—*learned*, or *unlearned*—teach us, O Lord, to know ourselves!

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T H E E N D.